

HEARING AND DOING

THE READY WAY

Z. to Blessedness, *16.2*

WITH

AN APPENDIX

Containing

RULES OF RIGHT

Hearing Gods Word.

By HENRY MASON, late Parson
of *S. Andrews Undershaft London.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *John Clark*, and are to
be sold at his Shop under *S. Peters*
Church in Cornhil, 1656.

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1554:90

TO THE RIGHT
Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM, Lord Bishop
of London, my Worthy
Patron and Diocesan.

Right Reverend,

HAVING once more
taken heart to
try the patience
of the world by
publishing a small Treatise;
I did heartily wish that this
occasion might afford me an
opportunity of presenting my
service and thanks to your
Lordship: which now I also
do with your Lordships per-
mission and leave. And I

A 2

Was

The Epistle

was the rather emboldned thereunto, because I finde it to have been an usuall thing among men, that Inferiours have brought poore and meane gifts to their Superiours and Betters ; and have been accepted for their good meanings sake. When Saul, at that time a poore & meane man, was to go to Samuel, then both a Prophet and a Prince, (a) hee thought it necessary to take a present in his hand though it were but a poore one, no more then the fourth part of a shekel of silver, which,
as

(a) 1. Sa.
9.9, 10.

Dedicatory.

as (b) the Learned do observe, is lesse then eight pence of our money. Vpon which passage there arise two questions. 1. Whether Samuel would not give his direction without a reward. 2. Why Saul would bring so despicable a gift to so honorable a person: which might seeme both boldnesse in Saul to offer, and baseness in Samuel to accept. To these questions the (c) Learned give one answer; that this was munus honorarium, a gift not meant as a recompense of a good turn,

(b) Mr. Brierwood de Num. c. 1. Tirin. proleg de antiquis ponderib. & monetis. p. 80.

(c) Non a l. pretii, sed ad honorem hoc refertur. Cajetan. in locum

The Epistle

but as an acknowledgement of homage and service. And herein they commend unto us the modestie and humility of Samuel, that did not scorn or refuse the meanest gift that came from a dutifull respect : because in such a case the mind of the Giver, and not the worth of the Gift is esteemed. For so we see, that God accepted from his people an handfull of the first fruits in a basket, for acknowledgement of his mercy in giving them that good Land, which yeelded them all that they had. And

our

Deut. 26.
2, &c.

Dedicatorie.

our Lord did so highly esteem
of a box of ointment,
which a woman out of her
love and serviceable respect
had powred upon his head;
that hee honoured the fact,
with a perpetuall remem-
brance of it in the Gospell
to the worlds end. Yea, and
great Lords are sometimes
contented with a pepper-
corne, or a red rose, for ac-
knowledgment of their right
and interest. This conside-
ration did encourage mee at
this time to tender this poore
service to your Lordship, in
acknowledgment of that du-

Matt. 26.
13.

The Epistle

ty, & of those thanks, which
we your Clergie of this City,
and my selfe more especially
do owe unto you, for your
Fatherly care over us. I dare
presume so much of my bre-
thren, and I may affirme it
of my selfe, that we take our
selves to bee so much obliged
to your Fatherhood, as we
know not how to make proof
of it in any proportionable
sort. Notwithstanding wee
hope, your Lordship will ac-
cept of our good meaning at
all times: & my selfe at this
time do pray that you will re-
ceive this poore tender of my
service

Dedicatory.

service : which I shall ever esteem among the rest of your favours towards me. And to second this service with another of the like rank ; I shall ever pray for your Lordships life and prosperity, that wee may long enjoy you as a tender Father to this part of his Church. And so , with my prayers I leave you to Gods blessings.

March 30.
1635.

Your Lordships in
all service to bee
commanded.

Henry Mason.



A

C

C

C



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this Treatise.

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7. *Hearing and doing the ready way to blessednesse, with an Appendix containing rules of right hearing Gods word.*

HEARING AND DOING

the ready way to
blessednesse.

CAP. I.

*The scope of this discourse, and
the intention of the Author.*



Blessednesse is the
end for which
man was made,
and to which the
frame of the world doth di-
rect, and whereunto him-
selfe in his daily thoughts
doth aspire. For though
most men are much corrup-
ted in their judgement con-
cerning good and evill: yet
B there

Cap. I.

there was never any man, but did desire his owne happinesse, as the soveraign and most desirable good. This being so, he that could and would point out the ready way, by which a man may become blessed, I suppose might deserve great thanks at every mans hands. And this our Lord hath done, as elsewhere in sundry places of the Gospell, so more especially in that Text of S. *Luk*, *But he said, Ye are rather, blessed are they that heare the word of God and keepe it.* For herein he instructeth us in the way to blessednesse; and that partly by his example, and more fully by his doctrine.

Luke II.
28.

And first by his example,
for when hee heard one of
the

the company proclaiming with a loud voice the blessednesse of that woman who had bred and brought up such a sonne; he taketh occasion hereby to discourse of the true blessednesse indeed which farre exceedeth all such blessings, as the breeding and bearing of a good sonne is : teaching us by this practice of his, how to make that use of ordinary occurrences in the world, which may stirre up our hearts to think on, and to seeke after the things that are above; which is a good step toward the blessednesse of heaven and eternall life.

And secondly our Lord teacheth us the way to happiness more fully by his

B 2 doctrine

Cap. I.

doctrine here delivered ; in which wee finde him telling us, that the true blessednesse ariseth out of piety and Gods service, that it is contained and set out in Gods word, and may be communicated unto us by our hearing and keeping of that word. All which points briefly and summarily set downe in our Saviours words, I intend by Gods grace to enlarge and amplifie, still laying the ground of my discourse in the sacred Text : hoping by my poore labours in this argument, I may somewhat further both my selfe and others, to the obtaining of that blessednesse, which wee all doe so much seeke after. That God
which

which hath put this thought into my heart, put that vertue into my words, that they may guide some soule or other to eternall life.

But before I enter upon the proposed points, it will be necessary first to unfold the Text : that so both our Lords doctrines & my comment upon them, may appear the more plainely.

The occasion of this speech was this : Our Lord had beene preaching the Kingdome of God to the people; and a *woman of the company* ravished with the gracious words, that proceeded from him, brake out into his praises, in these words, *Blessed is the wombe that bare thee, and the paps that thou*
B 3 *hast*

6 *The scope of this discourse,*

Cap. I. *hast sucked :* but this commendation given by the woman, our Lord correcteth in this manner; *Yea rather, blessed are they that heare the word of God, and keepe it.*

Which correction of our Saviour, that it may the better be conceived, wee must enquire, what there was amisse in this womans speech, that deserved a *correction*, and how our Lord did amend it.

And my answer thereto I set downe in two propositions.

I. Proposition, There was not any thing so amisse in this womans speech, as that she may be said either to have committed a sin, or to have uttered an untruth.

For

For by this word [*blessed*] this woman meant not that perfect blessednesse, which consisteth in the fruition of all good; such as our Saviour meant, when he said, *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. Mat. 5. 3.* but using the word in a vulgar sort, shee meant by it a great blessing of God bestowed on Christs mother; in the same sense that S. Paul said, *I thinke my selfe happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for my selfe this day, before thee, touching all these things, whereof I am accused of the Iews. Act. 26. 2.* For as Paul by these words meant, that he thought it a great blessing to himselfe, that he had such a Judge: so

Cap. 1.

this woman, by her words meant, that she thought it a great blessing to Christs mother, that she had such a son. And thus to call her a blessed woman, was neither a sinne, nor an untruth. First it was not an untruth; for *Solomon* saith, *The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoyce; and he that begetteth a wise childe, shall have joy of him: Thy father and thy mother shall bee glad; and she that bare thee, shall rejoyce. Prov. 23. 24, 25.* Where by saying, that they shall be glad, and shall have joy of such a sonne; hee implyeth, that he thought this to be a great blessing. But *David* speaketh more plainly, and in the very dialect or phrase of this woman:

Children

Children saith he, are an heritage of the Lord, & the fruit of the womb, is his reward. He meaneth it of good children onely, and of them hee addeth further; Blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them. Psal. 127. 3, 5.

Secondly, it was no sinne neither in this woman, that shee did thus magnifie the happinesse of Christs mother in regard of such a son: for *Solomon* and *David* in the places now cited did the like in the same case, or in a case not so just as this was. And upon these grounds I say in the first place, that there was nothing so farre amisse in this speech of the woman, as that we can say, she either committed a sinne, or spoke

Cap. I.

an untruth.

2. *Propos.* There was a defect in this speech, which might bee bettered and amended: for else our Lord would not have corrected it with a Yea rather. And (to speake particularly) the defect herein was twofold. 1. That shee did minde a lesser blessednesse, and fixed her thoughts upon that; when shee might, but did not, think on a farre greater blessednesse, then that was, and which concerned her in an higher degree. For it is a kinde of blessednesse indeed, to have a good and vertuous childe, that may comfort us in the world: but it is a farre greater blessednesse, to enjoy a father in heaven,

heaven, in whose presence
is fulnesse of joy for ever-
more. And if this woman
did not so esteeme of this
blessednesse, but with neg-
lect of it did magnifie the o-
ther; this was a fault that de-
served reprehension; Or if
she did upon the present oc-
casion, as I suppose she did,
magnifie the happinesse of
having a gracious sonne, re-
serving notwithstanding her
best affections for the hap-
pinesse of heaven: then
though shee could not bee
blamed, yet her speech
might be amended. He that
calleth them blessed, who
have godly children, saith
well; but hee that calleth
them blessed, who keepe
Gods commandements, saith
better.

Cap. 1.

better. And therefore our Lord did amend the womans speech, by turning it on that blessednesse, which she had neglected, or at least omitted to speake of. The summe of which correction is, as if hee had said, Thou sayest, *Blessed is the womb, &c.* Which though I deny not to be true; yet I will tell thee of a farre greater blessednes, then that is; *Blessed are they that heare the word of God and keep it.*

2. This woman made not so good an use of our Saviours doctrine, as shee might have done. When she heard him preach with great wisdom, and evidence of the Spirit; she brake out into the praises of the preacher,

cher, which were justly deserved by him : but she said nothing, perhaps she thought nothing of *amending* her life, or of performing what she was taught. And herein our Lord amendeth her speech by telling her, what better use shee might make of his Sermon. Shee commended him for his good Sermon, when she had done better, if shee had amended her selfe by his instruction. She said, *Blessed* is the mother that bred such a Preacher; but he said, *Nay rather blessed* is the hearer, that maketh use of his doctrine.

The Text being thus explained, I now proceed to speake of the points that I propounded; omitting other
by-notes,

Earthly things may occasion to

by-notes, which though they bee profitable in their season, yet are not pertinent to my purpose.

C A P. I I.

By earthly things a wise Christian may bee occasioned to seeke after heavenly blessings.

OUr Lord from this womans speech concerning the happinesse of his mother, for breeding such a childe; taketh occasion to discourse of the true happinesse, that accompanieth Gods service. And hence I observe, that it is a point of holy wisdom to take occasion for heavenly meditations,

ons, by the mention or sight
of earthly things.

My proofes for this are
two, the constant practice
of our Saviour, and the
helpes that it yeeldeth us
to a godly and an happy life.

I. The constant practice
of our Saviour, related and
commended to us in Scrip-
tures; for there wee reade,
that when he saw *Peter* and
Andrew busied in fishing, he
tooke occasion by the trade
that then they did use, to
tell them of an heavenly
trade of fishing for the souls
of men. *He saw them casting
a net into the Sea, (for they
were fishers :) and he said unto
them, follow mee, and I will
make you fishers of men. Mat.*
4. 18, 19.

Againe,

Cap. 2.

Againe, when some told him of his mother and his brethren, desiring to speake with him, he tooke occasion from the mention of his earthly kindred to instruct us in the spirituall kindred, that is betweene him and every good Christian. *It was told him by certain, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And hee answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these, which beare the word of God and doe it.. Luke 8. 20, 21.*

And againe, when the woman of Samaria came to draw water out of *Jacobs Well*; out of this accident he fetcheth occasion to instruct her in the living water, that
would

seeke after heavenly blessings.

17

Cap. 2.

would refresh her soule unto eternall life. There commeth a woman of Samaria to draw water : Iesus saith unto her, give me to drinke.—Then said the woman; how is it that thou being a Iew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? —Iesus answered and said unto her; If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drinke; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.—Of which water whosoever drinketh, shal never thirst : but the water that I shall give him, shall bee in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Ioh. 4. 7, 9, 14.

And yet againe, when the people followed after him, that

Cap. 2.

that they might eate of his bread; he taketh occasion from their desire of earthly meate, to instruct them concerning the bread of life. When the people came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus——*Iesus answered them and said, verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seeke mee, not because you saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meate which perisheth, but for that meate, which endureth to everlasting life. Iohn 6. 26, 27.*

Thus our Saviour by a constant custome, taketh occasion by the words that are spoken, and occurrences that happen in the world, to raise mens thoughts from earth

seeke after heavenly blessings.

19

Cap. 2.

earth to heaven : and from things that concerne this life to teach them spirituall lessons for obtaining of eternal life. By which practice of his, hee lifteth up men to heaven, while they remaine upon earth ; and breedeth in them heavenly mindednesse, while they are occupied about their worldly businesse. And this being his constant practice who is the wisdom of his father ; it proveth the truth of my conclusion, that it is a point of holy wisdom to take occasion for heavenly meditations by the mention or sight of earthly things.

II. The same point is further proved by the helps that we may receive from it towards

Cap. 2.

towards holinesse and an happy life. In which kinde I may reckon these that follow.

I. It will make every creature that we see, and every occurrence that wee meet with in the world, to serve us as *Schoolemasters* to lead us unto Christ; and as a Monitor to remember us of some duty. The meat on our tables will teach us the necessity of the meate that never perisheth; and our hungering after that will admonish us how wee should desire the food of Gods word, that we may grow and bee strengthened in grace by it. The clothes we put on, will remember us of *putting on the Lord Iesus*, and of the glorious

rious robes of righteousness, with which Gods children are adorned. The tender affection which we shew to our children; will bring to remembrance the great love of our heavenly father towards his sons and daughters. The duty and service that wee require of our servants, will tell us, what greater duty we owe to our Lord in heaven: and their failings towards us, will remember us of many defects of our owne in Gods service, and of our rebellions against his commandments.

And the like may be said of all other the like occasions and occurrences: so that not a crumme of bread, nor a corne of salt, nor a drop of drinke,

Cap. 1.

drinke, but as they serve to refresh nature, so they may serve also to increase and confirme grace in us. And all the creatures will have not onely a naturall use for this life; but also a spirituall use towards eternall life and the happinesse of the world to come.

2. This practice of gathering holy meditations from worldly occurrences will help to preserve us from abusing the creatures in a sinfull sort. Hee that when he eateth his meate for refreshing of his body, shall think withall, Yea, but how much more necessary and comfortable is the food of Gods word to the famished soule? will not likely abuse
the

the creatures to sursetting and excesse. And hee that when he putteth on his best clothes; shall think, Yea, but how much more glorious are the garments of righteousness and the fine linnen and silkes, with which the Saints are adorned? that man or that woman will not likely be proud of a silk gowne, or a gold ring, or a beaver hat, or an imbroidered petticoate, or any thing, that fine minions take pride in. And if a man while he is labouring in his Trade, shall think; Yea, but how much more paines should I take to enrich my soule with the treasures of Gods grace? that man will not have the heart to dishonour God by dishonest

Cap. 2.

nest gaine. And if a man, when hee exacteth diligent and daily labour from his apprentice or servants, and chideth thē, if they be slack in his service; shall think with himselfe, Yea, but how much more justly may God require all obedience at my hands, and chide and chasten mee for my great slothfulnesse in serving him? that man will never rule over his servants with rigor, nor oppresse them with too much work, or too little meate. And the like is true in all other the like cases. And by this meanes we shall be kept from a sinfull abuse of the creatures, which otherwise would bee a great hinderance to our happinesse

nesse and a blessed life.

3. The same practice will bee a meanes to season our hearts with heavenly mindednesse, even while wee are going about our worldly occasions. If wee should at any time forget God and our countrey that is above; every occurrence in this life would remember us of the life to come. When we are at worke in our shops, or sit downe to eat at our boards, or lie downe to rest on our beds, or walk out to take ayre in the fields; and wheresoever we are, and whatsoever we doe; some accident or other would befall us in our way, that would present good thoughts to our mindes and memories. And

C

by

Cap. 2.

by this meanes we should *have our conversation in heaven*, while we are upon the earth; as the Apostle speaketh: or, as a learned Writer phraseth it, we should have *an heaven upon earth*: and so in good part we should even in this life enjoy that happinesse, which we expect and desire fully to possesse in the life to come.

These are the proofes: the uses follow.

Vse 1. This detecteth the folly & preposterous course of worldlings, who usually goe the quite contrary way. The right way, & that which our Lord directeth us to by his example, is, that we use the creatures to bring us unto God: but these men use
God

God and his service to bring themselves to their desires in the world. Such men I meane, who shew great forwardnesse in religion, that they may compasse their worldly ends. They pray, and they professe, and they heare Sermons, and they entertaine Preachers: but their praying, and their professing, and their hearing, and their honouring of Preachers, are but as so many stalking horses under which they lie hid, till they have caught the prey. It is but a fable (but the moral of it is an evident truth;) which wise men tell us of a fishermans sonne. They say of him that he put himselfe into a Monastery, and there

Cap. 2.

lived as a poore Monke: but being of good parts by nature, and thriving well in his studies, was for his well-deserving advanced to bee the *Abbot* of the Monastery. Which place of dignity whē he had obtained; hee, in acknowledgment of his poore beginnings, and to remember himselfe whose sonne he was; caused a *net* to be spread upon his table-cloth, whensoever hee went to meate. Afterward, for his vertues he was thought fit to be a *Bishop*; and then was advanced to bee a *Cardinal*. And still in humility, and in thankfulnessse to God, the *net* was every day spread upon his table. And by this meanes he gained such an opinion
of

of humility and holinesse, that men thought him not onely worthy of the preferments which he had, but even of farre greater; and so in conclusion he was chosen to be *Pope*. In which place he lived as a great Lord, but forbore to spread the net any longer. And being asked the reason, he answered, that now the fish was taken for which he had spread the *net* all this while : meaning, that now he had gotten the preferment, at which he had still aimed. Beloved brethren, I suppose ye wil laugh at the devise: and some men perhaps will be the better pleased with it, because it was framed of a Clergyman. But shall I tell you what the

Cap. 2.

Poet said in a like case? [*Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur* :] Change but the name, and the fable fitteth your selves. It is not only meant of *Scribes* and *Pharisees* and such hypocriticall *Preachers*, who devoure widdowes and mens houses too under a shew of zealous preaching. But it is meant of *hypocriticall professors* also, who scarce ever open their eyes, save when they looke up to heaven : but it is that they may be thought to be holy & devout mē, & such as mind nothing but heavenly things. And it is meant of *covetous professors*, who frequent sermons, and pray with their families, and set up Lectures abroad, and talk nothing but

but Scripture phrase: and all this, that they may draw customers to their shops, or hook-in other mens estates into their hands, and breake with the more advantage. And it is meant of *ambitious* professors, who talk still in a popular language, and speak for the good of their country, and finde fault with the errors in our government, and like zealous *Patriots* indeed, take part with the Commoners against their Alderman, and with the subjects against their Sovereigne; and all that they may steale the hearts of the multitude, and by their voices and votes bee chosen into some place of honour, to which they doe aspire.

Cap. 2.

Against all these, and all others, who pretend religion, and intend their owne ends, was this fable devised. They are the men that spread the *net*, till the fish be taken; and more then that, they minde not. And of all these I say, they take a foolish and unprofitable course, because they make religion to serve for worldly ends; whereas all worldly things should serve the advancement of religion.

Vse 2. This is of great use for all them, who would serve God in sincerity. For it teacheth them how to gaine zeale and good affections towards God; not onely by hearing of sermons and reading of Scriptures, and
using

using a constant course in all holy duties; but even by the ordinary occurrences that they meete with in the world. If they follow this course, and make use of it, they may grow in grace, and gaine holy affections, while they are in their shops, and while they walk in the streetes, and while they conferre with their friends, and while they either think or do any thing by themselves. And this I suppose may bee a sufficient motive, to perswade us to this practice. And for our better direction in the right use of it, learned men have prescribed us some rules, and holy men have left us some examples; in whose steps if wee shall
C 5 tread,

tread, we may gaine the like comfort that they have done.

1. And first for rules :

Ludovicus Vives, a man renowned as well for piety as learning, among other learned workes of his, hath published a Treatise, which hee calleth *Excitationes animi ad Deum*; that is, *The listings up of the soule unto God*. In this book he prescribeth us rules of meditation and prayer upon every incidentall occasion : for example, when we awake out of sleep in a morning, and finde our selves refreshed by our rest; then hee biddeth us think, *how joyfull and blessed a thing it will be, to bee raised up to eternall life, after our sleeping*

ing in the grave; and to pray withall, that as God hath raised our bodies from their sleep, that wee may do the works of this life; so hee would raise up our soules from the sleep of sin, that we may do the works of piety and a godly life. And when wee are going on a journey; then we should think, that our life here is a *pilgrimage on earth*, in which we are separated from our owne countrey and our dearest friends, that is, from heaven, and the blessed soules that be there; and then wee should pray, that God will teach us to live here as *pilgrims* and *strangers*, that are travelling toward a better countrey, and that our conversation

versation may be in heaven, while our bodily mansion is on earth. And when we see a candle lighted in the evening, to be a comfort against the dismall darknesse of the night; that then we should think, how necessary the *knowledge of Gods word is*, which is a light to our eyes, and lanterne to our feete: and pray withall, that God would keep this candle still shining before us, that wee may know how to serve him aright. The like rules of good thoughts and prayers he prescribeth us, when we put on our clothes, when we go out of doores, when we sit down to meate, when we prepare to bedward, and upon other the like occasions;

ons ; leaving us no part of the day, nor no occasion of our life, without some holy thoughts, that may make us like to the Saints, that be in heaven. This book of *Vives* and the *meditations* and *prayers* contained in it, that worthy Martyr *M. Bradford* hath translated, or the greatest part of them into our English tongue, and hath presented them to the view of the world, in a book of his, called *Bradford's Meditations and prayers*. And after him, *M Henry Bull*, who hath gathered together many sweete flowers of such like devotion, hath also, for the benefit of his countrey-men printed these meditations and prayers among the rest.

There,

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There, if ye please, yee may reade them : and I dare say, if ye reade them with attention and care, you will not think your labour either lost or ill bestowed. Besides these books, there is one also of late yeares, penned by a reverend and learned Prelate of our Church, called *Occasionall Meditations*. In it you are directed how on ordinary and triviall occasions, yee may raise up your thoughts to heaven-ward. But that book I suppose, is in the hands of most men : and the known worth of the Author will sufficiently commend it to their reading. I onely will say thus much, that who so shall peruse these books, and make use

use of them accordingly ; I doubt not, but he will finde in them good helps to heaven, and great comfort to his soule. And so I leave the Rules.

2. The examples, that I make choise of for this purpose, are two.

1. *Examp.* The first of one *Pambo*, an ancient and religious man. Of him * *Socrates* reporteth, that seeing a light woman finely tricked up, and sumptuously adorned, that shee might please, and allure lovers unto her, hee burst out into teares, and being asked why he wept, he gave these two reasons for it. 1. because he saw in what miserable state that woman was in; it grieved

* *Secrat. hist.* l. 4 c. 18. pag. 660.
Rosw. de vitis Patrum l. 3. num. 164. pag. 524.
v. etiam l. 1. c. 1. in vita S. Pelagii. pag. 377. de Nonno Episcopo.

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ved him that so goodly a creature of Gods making, should be in so ready a way to hell and destruction : and

2. because, said he, I do not take so much paines to please my good God, as she doth to please sinfull men.

This example if we wil follow, we may make use of it divers wayes for our good : namely thus ; when we see a *Porter* sweating under his burden, that he may earne a poore wages ; we may check our own dulnesse, who are so soone weary of labouring for an eternall Kingdome ; that we grudge to spend a quarter of an houre in prayer, or a whole houre in hearing of Gods word, or a day in abstinence and fasting for our

our sins. For what a shame is it that a labouring man should willingly take so much paines for a tester or a shilling, when we think so little paines to be overmuch for obtaining of eternall life and the Kingdome of heaven? And when we see a *Shopkeeper* abridge himself of his meate and of his sleep, that hee may attend his customers and make gaine of his trading; wee may justly blame our selves for our backwardnesse in Gods service, and that we cannot abridge our selves in our eating and in our sleeping and in our sporting and in our clothing, that wee may bee the fitter and more expedite for good duties and for the Kingdome

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Kingdome of God. And when we see a man that taketh *physick*, fast aforehand, and after the taking of it, to content himselfe with a thin supping, that the medicine may work the better; wee may think every man with himselfe, what a foole am I, that on the Lords day, when God prepareth and giveth me *physick* for my soule, I do so fill my stomach with meate, and my head with strong drink, as maketh my selfe unfit for Gods service, and my praying, and hearing and reading unprofitable for my soule? And when wee see men and women look themselves in the *glasse* every day, that they may carie with them no spots or deformity

mity in their faces, that may shame them when they goe abroad among men : wee should accuse our shamelesse security in matters of our soules, and that we doe not examine our consciences and look our soules in the glasse of Gods Law, that there bee no deformity in our lives, that may shame us before God and his Angels. I might make many such applications of *Pamboes* practice to our selves, and gather such collections to shame our selves for our indevotion and want of feeling : but out of these there is direction enough for them that are willing to make use of it; & too much for them, who shal despise it.

2. Examp.

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(α) ὁ δὲ
 ποτὲ φη-
 σὶν αὐ-
 θρώπις
 με δὲ-
 λεύειν
 ἐννεύον-
 κα ἀλλὰ
 τὸ θεῷ·
 καὶ τῆς
 ἡσυχίας
 πάσης ἀ-
 νάξιν
 ἑαυτὸν
 κατὰ δ-
 υῶτας,
 αὐτὴν
 τὴν τῶ
 πνεύ-
 θεον ὁ-
 πείων ἦσιν
 τῆς μελ-
 λουσας
 φλογος
 διὰ παρ-
 τὸς καὶ
 τιμας.
 Climac.
 Grad. 4.
 pag. 49.

2. *Examp.* The second example is of a Cook in a Colledge of religious men. Of him *Climacus* a Greek father in the anciēt Church, relateth that hee was very devout in serving God, and often moved with compunction to mourne for his sins. Which *Climacus* observing, importuned him to know by what meanes he had attained to such a degree of sanctitie and holinesse; and he after some intreaties answered him to this effect; (α) *I*, saith he, in this work of the Kitchen, *did never think that I served men, but God*, who enjoyned me true service in my place: *and judging my selfe unworthy of any rest by reason of my many failings,*

seeke after heavenly blessings.

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failings, when I look on this fire in my chimney; how intolerable the burning thereof would be to my flesh, I am put in minde of the everlasting and much more unsufferable burnings of hell fire, due to all impenitent sinners; and the thought of this torment doth resolve me into teares for my sins.

And now if we will make use of this example, we shall not need to goe abroad, and gather instructions from other mens lives, as *Pambo* did : we shall finde matter enough at home to exercise our thoughts with. For example sake, and to set our consciences on work in this duty; If any of us shall bee tormented with an headach
or

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or a toothach, or with the stone, or strangury, or a hot fever, or some other tormenting paine, that will not suffer us to take any rest; we may make the like use of the burning fever, or tormenting ach which we feel, that this *Cook* did of the scorching fire, which he looked upon. We may think, if this little smart in comparison, and these short torments seem so unsufferable, as that I would not endure them for a yeare together, though I might gaine a Kingdome by it; how unsufferable are the eternall torments of hell fire, and what a fool am I, if I plunge my soule into them for ever for gaining of a paltry profit,

fit, and a fading and a filthy pleasure? And if after drinking a cup of pleasant wine in our thirst, or after eating a good dinner in our hūger, or if after a sweete sleep when we have been weary, we finde our selves comforted and refreshed; then there is occasion to think, O Lord how much more joy and refreshing will it bee to my soule, when I shall rest from *all my labours in Abrahams besom*, and with *Abraham and Isaac and Iacob shall eat bread in the Kingdome of God*, and shall bee fed with the pleasures of Gods house for evermore? And againe, if at any time wee be overjoyed (& who sometimes is not?) when some great preferment

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ment befalleth us, such as are a high place in the Court, a great office in the City, or some matter of much gaine in our trading; then it will be seasonable to think, if such a scant advancement do so much overjoy mee, what a joy will it bee, and how shall I rejoyce, when I shall be taken to bee Gods adopted son, and to be heire of his Kingdome, and a fellow citizen with the Saints in glory? And thus we may doe on all the like occasions: and if thus we do doe, still converting earthly occurrences into matter of heavenly meditations, we shall be profited toward salvation by every thing of moment that we see or heare abroad,
and

seeke after heavenly blessings.

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and by those things which we find & feel in our selves.

But this practice is never more seasonable, nor never more profitable, then when we come to the *Lords Table*. In this Sacrament wee have for the outward matter of it, bread and wine, in substance the same with that which is upon our own boards, but in use of a far different nature. When they be upon our own boards, then they be naturall things, ordained for the refreshing of the body, and preservation of mans nature: but when they bee on Gods board, they are spirituall things ordained for the nourishment of the soul, and the preservation of Gods grace within us. Now

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if it be a point of wildome to take occasion of heavenly thoughts from them, when they are meere naturall things; how necessary will it be to have more elevated thoughts of them, when they are consecrated to a mysticall and supernaturall use? Now that they are set apart to a sacred use, they must needs be profaned, if they be not handled in a sacred sort. Here they are holy *signes*, which represent Christ unto us with all the benefits of his Passion: and we make them as no signes, if we doe not see Christ and his death represented in them. Therefore in the celebration of this Sacrament, the Church teacheth the Minister

Minister to say. [*sursum corda*] *lift up your hearts*; and it teacheth the people to answer him back again, *Wee lift them up unto the Lord.* When therefore our eyes doe look on these creatures on the Lords Table; our hearts should look to Christ in heaven. When we see the bread cut and broken in pieces; that biddeth us remember, that his sacred body was broken and torne in pieces for our sins. And when we see the wine powdered out of the vessel into the cup, and out of the cup into our bodies; that biddeth us remember, that his precious blood was emptied out of the veines, that our soules might be purged from their

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lins. And when the bread and wine is delivered into the Communicants hand; that telleth him, that God the Father doth now reach unto him from heaven, the flesh and blood of his deare Son, that they may nourish his soule to eternall life, as the bread and wine doth nourish his body for this naturall life. So that in the whole institution of this Sacrament there is nothing dumb, or without its signification : and so likewise in the celebration of it, wee should passe by nothing, as if we were deafe, and did not understand the meaning of it. For conclusion, as *S. Paul* said to *Timothie*, so I say to every Communicant,
Meditate

seeke after heavenly blessings.

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Meditate on these things, while ye be about this holy work : and, Consider what I say; and the Lord give you understanding in all things; that ye may know how to make use of all Gods ordinances for his Glory and your own comfort.

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1 Tim. 4.
15.

C A P. III.

The blessings of this life are nothing to the blessednesse of the life to come.

WHen this woman magnified the happiness of that mother, who had bred so good a childe, as he was who had discoursed in this manner; our Lord amended her speech by tel-

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ling her of a far greater blessednesse then that was, consisting in the hearing and keeping of Gods word. And hence I collect, that the blessing of good children, and other the good things of this life, are much short of the blessednesse, which accompanieth godlinesse and an holy life.

The proofes for confirmation hereof are three,
1. The testimony of *Solomon*. 2. The condition of worldly happinesse in it self considered. and 3. Its want of those excellencies, that are in the true blessednesse.

I. The first prooffe is the Testimony of *Solomon* set down in the book of *Ecclesiastes*. In it his Testimony
is

is delivered 2. wayes. 1. In a generall doctrine. 2. In particular instances.

1. His doctrine is this; Of all worldly blessings, and the happinesse that men can gaine by them; he saith in the entrance of his book, *Vanitie of vanities, saith the Preacher; vanity of vanities: and all is vanity. Eccles. 1. 2.* He meaneth that all the things of this life, without godlinesse and a good conscience, are meere emptinesse and things of nothing. Thus hee beginneth his speech concerning the glittering greatnesse of this world, and then of the true blessednesse, that accompanieth Gods service, hee addeth in the conclusion of

Earthly blessings are nothing to that book; Let us heare the conclusion of the whole matter; feare God and keep his Commandements: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement, &c. Eccles. 12. 13, 14. Where 1. when hee saith, Let us heare the conclusion of all, hee meaneth that that which now hee was to say, namely to feare God, and keep his commandements, was the substance of all that needed to be said, the summ of all that either the Preacher needed to teach, or the people needed to learne. This alone is sufficient to make a man happy. And 2. when he saith, for this is the whole duty of man, he giueth the reason, why he had said

said of godlinesse that it was the *summe of all*, namely because it is the whole duty of man, that is, all that is required of him to the attaining of blessednesse and eternall glory. Lay these things together, and the summe is, that all other things are of no worth; onely the feare of God and his service is enough of it selfe to make a man truly and eternally happy. This is the generall doctrine, that the Preacher teacheth in that book.

2. His particular instances are these and such like. He propoundeth for example sake, ^(a) *humane wisdom*, ^(b) *worldly mirth* ^(c) *pleasures* of all sorts, ^(d) *riches*, and *worldly wealth*, ^(e) *children*

D 5. and

(a) Eccl.
1. 16. &c.
(b) ca. 2.
1, 2.
(c) ca. 2.
3. &c.
(d) ca. 4.
9. &c.
(e) ca. 6.
3. &c.

Earthly blessings are nothing to

and *long life, &c.* all which are esteemed the chief treasures of this life : and of all these *Salomons* conclusion still in the end of the discourse is, that it is *vanity and vexation of spirit*. And by this he giveth us to understand, that having made diligent search, & gon through the whol course of the world to seek for blessednesse to content his soule ; he could finde nothing among the most desirable things, but *vanity and vexation*, nothing that could give him any satisfaction or contentment. It was onely the *feare of God* and his service that could yeeld that which he sought for. This is the first prooffe of the point : and it is a full
and

and a cleare one.

II. The second is, the *Condition* of worldly blessings considered in themselves; and it is this, that for all the goodly shews that they make, yet if they bee without godlinesse, they leave a man still in a cursed and a damnable state. For a man may have good children and himselfe may be a bad man. So it was with *Saul* and *Jonathan* his son; and with *Ahaz* and *Ezekias* his son; and with *Manasses* and *Iosias* his son. And so a man may have riches, and honours, and pleasures; and yet be in a worse case, then the begger that lyeth at his gate. So it was with *Dives* in the Gospell: he was clothed

*Earthly blessings are nothing to
bed with purple, and fared de-
licately every day, and was
honourable among his
neighbours; and yet Dives
was in a miserable case even
in the midst of all this abun-
dance. A few dayes did but
passe over his head; and hee
was caried into hell, and
tormented in that flame,
and could not obtaine
so small a comfort, as a drop
of water to coole his bur-
ning. And whereto now
did all his former pomp
serve him, but onely to make
him more sensible of his
torments? *Miserum est su-
isse fœlicem*; It is an increase
of a mans misery, that hee
hath formerly been happy.
And now I dare say there is
never a man living, but will
think that *LAZARUS* with all*

his beggery and sores was in a far more happy condition, then *Dives*, who lived in such plenty and honour. And this example alone, (to say nothing of *Pharaoh* and *Haman*, and *Belshazzar*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, and *Herod*, and such like; this example, I say alone) is prooffe enough, that all worldly blessings may leave a man in a miserable and cursed condition, for any help that they can afford him. And doth that deserve the name of happinesse, that leaveth the possessors of it in such a miserable and cursed state?

III. Thirdly, the same truth is further proved, because the greatest happinesse in this world is destitute

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tute of those prerogatives which are the proper glory of the true blessednesse, namely these 3. fulnesse, sincerity, and eternity.

1. The first prerogative is *fulnesse* without any lack or defect. For true blessednesse is accompanied with full joy, even as much, as either the heart can desire, or the soule receive. *David* speaking of this blessednesse, saith unto God; *In thy presence is fulnesse of joy for evermore. Psal. 16. ult.* A vessell is said to bee full, when it hath as much, as it can hold; and so that joy is full, when it is as much as there is any roome to receive it. And such is the joy saith *David*, that is in Gods Kingdome.

But

But that speech of the Gospel is yet more significant and full, when it is said to the good servant, *Enter into the joy of thy Lord. Mat. 25. 23.* For when we speak of a cup of water, wee doe not say that the man entereth into it, but that it entereth and is taken down into the man: because that water though it may fill the man, yet it is no greater, then the capacitie of the mans stomach, into which it is received. But if we speak of a river, or a bathing tub, or such like large continent, we cannot say, that the river, or the tub of water entreth into the man, but rather that the man goeth or entereth into it; because the quantity or measure

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Tam magnum est gaudium celestis patriæ de Deo, ut non possit concludi in homine: & ideo homo intrat in gaudium illud incomprehensibile, & non intrat gaudium illud in hominem, ut comprehensum ab homine. Ca-jet in Mat. 25. 23.

sure of that water is greater then the man is capable of, or can receive. And so in this case when our Lord receiveth his faithfull servant, into his heavenly Kingdom, he saith not, *Let the joy of thy Lord enter into thee*, but *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, because, as a learned Writer observeth, those joys of Gods Kingdome are so full, that they run over, and cannot be contained within us, our scant vessels are not large enough to receive them. Such is the fulnesse of joy that is found in true blessednesse.

But now the blessednesse of this world (take it when it is at the best and at the fullest) though it have its comforts

comforts and its joyes ; yet a fulnesse of joy it cannot be said to have, because alwaies something is wanting that that happy man still doth desire : and that in two respects; 1. because there is no such fulnesse or perfection in any one blessing, but that he who hath it, doth desire more. 2. because if any man had as much of one blessing, as he could desire, yet there would be a want of some other blessing, that would disturb his joy in that which he possessed.

1. There is no fulnesse in one worldly comfort, but still there is a want of something, that the man would have more then that which he hath. *Ahab* was a King and

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and had great possessions and lands; but yet hee wanted a *garden of herbs*, such as *Naboths* vineyard might make; & for wāt was so grieved, that he could not eate: and therefore he killed *Naboth*, that hee might enjoy his inheritance. And so now adayes, a man may bee a great rich man, say he bee as rich as this world hath any; and yet he hath not so much land, but he seeketh to purchase more, nor so much money but hee thinketh what way hee may increase his store. And still wee see it happen as *Solomon* observed, that he who loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loneth abundance, with increase. *Eccl. 5. 10.*

And

And so it is in other things:

The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the eare with hearing.

Eccles. 1. 8. He that hath an able body; say as strong as *Samson*; yet wanteth soundnesse, or some strength, or some agility, which he desireth by physick, and food, and exercise to increase or amend. And hee that is indued with great learning and much wisdom, say hee were as wise as *Solomon*; yet findeth each day some defect, and learneth by continuall experience, that there are mo things, which hee knoweth not, then those are which he knoweth. And so wee may say of all other things of this life; they are never so great, but more
may

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may be added, and more will be desired. And therefore there is no fulnesse in them.

2. Say, that a man were so happy, as to enjoy some one blessing in such perfection, as that hee neither needeth nor desireth more : yet he is short in some other blessing, the want of which will abate or rather damp his joy in the other. For example, *Naaman* was rich and *valiant* and *honourable* : but yet *Naaman* was a *Leper*, and sought with much labour and great cost, to bee eased of this disease. And so it is with us; a man may have some blessings that may comfort him : but yet hee wanteth many others that will afflict him not a little.

It

It may bee a man may bee rich, but unlearned; or rich and learned, but unhealthy; or rich and learned and healthy (though all this is but seldome seen in one man;) but yet he is unfortunate in his wife, or in his children, or in his friends, or in his credit, &c. But the man was never yet known, that enjoyed all things, that he could wish. And if there bee a want of some good things; then there is not a fulnesse of all joy. And consequently the worldly happinesse is much short of the true happinesse, in which there is fulnesse without want, and perfection without any defect.

2. True happinesse hath
this

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this prerogative, that it hath sincere joyes, without mixture of any other sorow. S. Iohn in the Revelation describeth true blessednesse to be such, as that men who enjoy it, shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heate. Apoc. 7. 16. and Apoc. 21. 4. God, saith he, shall wipe away all teares from their eyes: and there shall bee no more death, neither sorow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more paine. In which words, 1. when he saith, *They shall hunger no more, &c.* he meaneth there shall bee nothing within them that may breed them any paine. 2. When he saith, *Neither shall the sun light upon the, &c.* hee

hee implyeth that nothing from without them, shall annoy them. 3. When hee saith, *God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes*; he telleth us the reason, why there is such perfection of good, and such freedome from evill; and that is, because in heaven wee enjoy God himselfe by immediate vision, and in God there is no defect: but while wee are in this life, we are preserved and upheld by the use of the creatures; and all they are defective and imperfect. And hence the conclusion is, that in heaven there is no more death, nor no more sorow, nor no more paine.

But contrariwise the blessings of this life have
ever

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ever some tang of sorow mixed with them; which will damp all the joy. *Belshazzar* was quaffing it in his cups, and frolicking it with his friends, when loe, there *came forth the fingers of a mans hand*, and wrote his judgement upon the wall: at the sight whereof the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joynts of his loines were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. *Dan. 5. 5, 6.* And so *Haman* was one of the worlds darlings, in great favour and highly advanced by the King, and invited by the Queen to one banquet after another: so that *Haman* went out joyfull and with a glad heart:

heart : and a man would have thought that hee had been the Minion, on which the world had chosen to bestow her choicest favours. But *Haman* was no sooner gone out overjoyed with his great preferments, but hee met with *Mordecai* the Jew, who would not doe him reverence : and this unrespectivenesse in a poore alien did so pierce his heart, that he was forced to say; *All this* [greatnesse] *availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the Kings gate.* *Ester 5.9.13.* And so it is with all other the happy men of this world. Either men do molest them, and fill them full of feare, or of anger, or of envy, or of

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some

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some other unquiet passion;
 or else God from heaven
 doth thunder upon them,
 and setteth their owne con-
 science against them, which
 (as the poet said,) *furdo ver-
 bere credit, giveth them many
 a smarting lash, when the world
 heareth not the stroke.* Thus
 one worm or other there is,
 which gnaweth upon their
 heart, while they rejoyce in
 their pomp; and they still
 finde *Solomons* proverb to
 be true, *Even in laughter the
 heart is sorrowfull; and the end
 of that mirth is heavinesse.*
Prov. 14. 13. In this respect
 then the worldly happinesse
 is not comparable to the
 happinesse of heaven, all
 whose joyes are without
 mixture of any griefe.

3. True

3. True happinesse hath
eternity added to its joyes.
As they are *full* without
want of any good, and *sin-*
cere without mixture of any
evill; so they are *sternall* in
the continuance of them
both. In the description of
the last judgement it is said
of * Gods blessed ones, that
they go into life everlasting.
Mat. 25. ult. And David
saith of these joyes, *At thy*
right hand, O Lord, there are
pleasures for evermore. Psal. 16.
ult. And S. Peter, that it is an
everlasting Kingdome. 2 Pet.
1. 11. and *an inheritance in-*
corruptible, and undefiled, and
that fadeth not away. 1. Pet. 1.
4. And the reason is, be-
cause God hath appointed
this life to be a passage to the

* Come
ye blef-
sed of
my Fa-
ther.

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other; but the life to come to be the permanent and fixed state, in which all men receive their reward. Therefore when *Dives* being in hell, desired that *Lazarus* might come out of *Abrahams* bosome; to refresh him; No. saith *Abraham*, that cannot be, for betwixt us and you is a great gulfe fixed, so that they which would passe from hence to you, cannot; neither can they passe to us, that would come from thence. *Luke 16. 26*: Implying, that there is no removing nor no changing in the life to come; but those that are once in hell, shall be in hell for ever, and those that be in heaven, neither can nor will depart thence. The blessednesse then

then of heaven, which is the onely true blessednesse, is eternall and unchangeable.

But it is not so with the happinesse of this world: they are changeable, nay changing every day: and that two waies, or in two respects: Either because they are of a fading nature, and may leave us when wee have most need of them; or because we are of a mortall constitution, subject to dissolution and death, and then we must leave them, if they leave not us before.

1. Riches are of a *fading nature*, still ebbing and flowing like the sea, and oftentimes dried up like the summer brookes. *Riches*, saith Solomon, *make themselves*

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wings, and flye away as an Eagle towards heaven. Prov. 23.

(2) Job 1.

25. Meaning by this expression to tell us how hastily they leave us. (2) Job was a happy man in all worldly respects, happy in his children, and happy in his authority, and happy in his possessions, so that there was none like him in all the land: but in one day thieves came and caried away his oxen and his asses, and murdered his servants; and a fire from heaven came, and burnt up his sheep, and the servants that kept them, and a winde from the wilderness came, and cast downe the house where his children were, and destroyed them all. Nor was this all,
with

with the losse of children,
and goods, and possessions,
hee lost his authority and
command also. For where-
as he was before^(b) honored
of the best, now ^(c) the very
boyes had him in *derision*,
and the abjects of the world
made him their *song*. And
thus it is with us now also.
Be a man never so rich, and
so plentiful in all things;
yet either thieves may rob
him, or false servants may
beguile him, or bad credi-
tors may faile him, or fire
may consume him, or some
misfortune or other may
befall him, and sweep all a-
way in a moment. And if
his goods be once gone, then
farewell his honour, and his
credit, and his power: hee

(b) Job.
29. 21.
&c.
(c) Job.
30. 1, 9,
10.

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that sate before on the bench like a Judge, may with *Iob* sit upon the dung-hill without any man that will care for him.

Secondly, say, that worldly preferments abide with us still; Yet if they leave not us, we are sure to leave them; nor can we say, how soone it may be. The rich man in the Gospell had laid up much wealth, which hee supposed should serve him for many yeares: and possible they might so, saving that he himselfe wanted dayes to enjoy them. Hee said, *Soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeares; eat, drink, and be merie.* But God said, (and his word must stand) *Thou foole, this night thy*

thy soule shall be required of thee: and then whose shall those things be, that thou hast provided? Luke 12. 19, 20.

And so now, we that are in health this day, are not sure that we can live till the next day. If now wee blesse our selves in our fortunes, and think our selves happy in our children, in our friends, in our preferments, in our possessions and houses, and make an account that wee are now settled to our mind: yet how can we be sure, that it may not bee said to us from heaven, *Thou foole, this night, or this day will they take away thy soule from thee.* And then whose shall those dwellings, and those preferments, and those

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friends and those offices, and those bags and chests, whose shall they be, when thou goest to thy grave and they cannot follow thee?

This point is of use divers wayes: it serveth for comfort to the poore, for admonition to the Rich, and for instruction to us all.

Use 1. It is for comfort to the poore. For if the things of this life have so little matter of happinesse in them, why should any man grieve to want that, which can do him no more good? And if there be such perfection of happinesse in enjoying God and a good conscience, why should any man be discōtēted for want of other things, while hee enjoyeth

enjoyeth these? *Mephibosheth* was so well contented with the favour of the King, that when *Zibah* his servant had coustened him of the one halfe of his lands, he answered, *Nay, let him take all, forasmuch as my Lord the King, is come againe in peace to his own house. 2 Sam. 19. 29, 30.* meaning that he cared not for lands & livings, so he might enjoy the favour of the King. And much rather may every poore Christian say, It mattereth not though I bee robbed of my goods, and turned out of my possessions, and left destitute of all things, so that I may enjoy Christ, and his merits and live with God in glory. Let the world
take

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take all; seeing I have God to be my father, and Christ to be my Saviour, and the holy Spirit to be my Comforter. This comfort and contentment the poorest man that serveth God aright may gather from this doctrine.

Vse 2. It is for admonition to the rich and great men of the world: it teacheth them, not to place happinesse in these outward things. *S. Pauls direction to Timothie is, Charge them that be rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertaine riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.* 1 Tim. 6. 17. In these words I note two things; 1. What rich

rich men are charged with, and that is, that they *trust* not in their riches, as if they were safe, because they were great, or happy because they were wealthy. and 2. Why they should observe this charge, and that is implied in the condition ascribed to their riches, *uncertain* riches. For it were a folly to trust in that which may faile us, when we have most need of it. And as rich men may not trust in their riches; so *honourable* men must not trust in their honors, and *learned* men must not trust in their learning, and *popular* men must not trust in their credit with the multitude: nor may any man trust in man or humane things. But

as

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as our Saviour, when one shewed him the goodly buildings of the Temple, *Seest thou these great buildings?* (said he,) *there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.* So when we look upon our faire houses, wee should say to our selves, There is never *a wall* in this house, nor tile on this rooffe, but it will wast and come to nothing: nor can I have any certain dwelling, till I have an house given of God eternall in the heavens. And when wee look upon our Lands and Lordships, our thoughts should be these or such like. There is never *a foot* of this ground, nor never *a parcell* of these possessions, but will be taken

taken out of my hands, and
be possessed by I know not
whom. And so when wee
look on our chests of gold,
and presses of cloths, & cup-
boards of plate; when on
our goodly children, and
rich friends and kinred:
still wee should tell our
selves; *All these things will
faile and forsake me yer long.*
Not a peny of all my coine;
nor a rag of all my garments,
nor any man or woman of
all my kinred and acquain-
tance, can folow mee to my
grave, or ease mee of my
paine, or help mee at my
greatest neede. And oh then
my soule, why do not I lay
up treasures in heaven, and
provide bags that wax not
olde, and make mee such
friends

Luke 12.

33.

Luk. 16 9

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friends of my goods, as, when I faile, may receive me into everlasting habitations? These thoughts rich men may learn from this doctrine. And if they learn it well, they will not bee proud of their worldly wealth.

Vse 3. This point is for instruction of us all. We hence may learn, seeing worldly blessings are nothing to the blessednesse of heaven; that therefore we should be very fooles, if wee would part with heaven for any thing upon earth. Wee all condemne the *prophanenesse* of *Esau*, who sold his birth-right for a messe of pottage. And we detest the wickednesse of *Indas*, who sold his
Saviour

Saviour for a few pieces of silver. And there is as great cause to condemne the unjust dealer, that for a small gaine, maketh away his right to heaven. And so I may say of the ambitious man, who selleth Christ for honours; and of the vain-glorious man who selleth him for praises of men; and of the intemperate man, who selleth him for his belly cheare; and of the lascivious man, who selleth him for carnall pleasure; and of every man, who for any thing in this world, selleth away God and a good conscience. Let not us be so unwise, as to make such foolish bargaines; Rather learn wee of *Naboth* to hold fast our inheritance.

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tance. *Ahab* offered him as good a vineyard, as that was, if he would part with it for the Kings use; but *Naboth* answered, *God forbid, that I should give thee the inheritance of my fathers.* 1 Kings 21. 3. The devill though hee be an impudent lyer, yet cannot for shame say, that hee can give us as good a blessing on earth as the blessednesse of heaven is. And therefore when he offereth us honours and preferments and pleasures and possessions to bee gained by wicked or unlawfull meanes, which will deprive us of heaven and eternall happinesse; How much rather should wee answer him in *Naboths* words, *God forbid that I should sell away*
the

the inheritance of my heavenly father; or part with so glorious a possession for so vile a price. Let the devill offer such bargaines as these, to the fooles of the world, whose mindes the God of this world hath blinded, that they cannot see either the glory of heaven or the vanity of earthly things.

C A P.

CAP. IV.

There is a supernaturall blessednesse appropriated to Gods service.

WHen the woman of the company pronounced her blessed, who was the mother of such a son: our Lord not denying that to bee true in a vulgar acception, in which the woman meant it; doth notwithstanding correct her speech by telling her of a far greater blessednesse belonging to them, that heare Gods word and keep it. And hence ariseth this conclusion or theoreme of great use to a Christian life, that the true
and

and supernaturall blessednesse belongeth and is appropriated to the service of God.

This is plainly and plentifully confirmed by Scriptures, such as these are:

Blessed is the man, that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly, &c. Psal. 1. 1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.—in whose spirit there is no guile. Psal. 32. 1, 2. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies and seek him with their whole heart. Psal. 119. 1, 2. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven.

Mat. 5. 10.

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Mat. 5. 10. With many other the like sayings to the same purpose. In all which I note two things : 1. That they speak of a supernaturall, not of any worldly blessednesse, so called : for they place this blessednesse in the right to the Kingdome of heaven ; and they ascribe this blessednesse to *persecutions* suffered for Christs sake, which is quite contrary to the nature of worldly happiness. 2. I note that these Scriptures doe place the ground and roote of this blessednesse in holinesse and a godly life. Lay these two together, and they prove the point, that true and celestiall blessednesse belongeth to Gods service or a godly life.

More

More then this needeth not for prooffe of the conclusion : but for more full declaration of it, 3. Questions are to be cleared; 1. Wherein this blessednesse doth consist. 2. Why it is ascribed to the service of God. And 3. how men are said to partake of this blessednesse in this life.

1. *Quest.* The first question is, wherein this blessednesse doth consist : and the answer thereto is, that it consisteth in the immediate fruition of God, of and by himselfe supplying all good things, and expelling or driving away all evill. In this answer I say three things.

Ans.

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Ans. That it is in the fruition of God. For all the good, that wee have or can have, is from him. *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* Acts 17. 28. and Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights. James 1. 17. And if every good gift, then blessednesse among the rest, or rather more especially then any of the rest, is given us of God our heavenly father. And when from him we receive this blessednesse, then are wee truly said to enjoy him, because he then communiceth himselfe unto us in one of his especiall blessings. For as a man is said to enjoy the Sun, when
by

by its presence and aspect,
it communicateth light and
influence unto him; and as
he is said to enjoy a friend,
who hath his company and
acquaintance, so as he recei-
veth comfort and content-
ment from him; or, as the
Apostle saith, that God gi-
*vet*h us richly all things to en-
joy, 1 Tim. 6. 17; when wee
have them, & may use them
for our good: so, and in the
like sense we are said to have
the fruition of God, or to en-
joy him, when he is so neare
unto us, and in such manner
present wth us, as that he cō-
municateth unto us his mer-
cies and blessings. And that
thus the blessed man do then
joy God, I take it to be plain,
when it is said in the Gospel;

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Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Mat. 5.8.
 For to see God includeth two things, to enjoy him, and to live in his presence in his glory. That it signifieth to enjoy him, appeareth by the custome of Scripture phrase; In which, to see good is to enjoy it. *Psal. 34. 12.* and, to see good dayes, is to enjoy good dayes. *1 Pet. 3. 10.* and to see corruption is to partake of it. *Psal. 16. 10.* and to see death, is to suffer death. *Iohn 8. 51.* and *Heb. 11. 5.* and not to see good or evill, when it commeth; is as much as not to partake of it. *Ier. 17. 6, 8.*

And if in the Scripture phrase, to see good, and to see evill, and to see death,
 and

and to see corruption, bee to partake of them, and when the speech is of that, which is good, to enjoy them; then I doe but speak according to the phrase of Scripture, if I say that to *see God*, in that place of the Gospell, is to enjoy him : and so to see and enjoy him, is the Blessed mans portion.

And therefore I say in the first place, that Blessednesse doth consist in the fruition of God.

B. Secondly, I say, that this fruition, belonging to the blessed man, is the *immediate fruition* of God. For understanding hereof wee must note, that there is a two-fold enjoying of God; the one mediate, and the

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other immediate. *Mediate-*
ly we are said to enjoy God,
when hee communicateth
himselſe unto us by ſecon-
dary meanes, and by inter-
poſition of the creature be-
tween him and us : as name-
ly, when he feedeth us by
meate and drink, lightneth
us by the ſun, inſtructeth us
by his word, ſtrengtheneth
us in grace by the Sacra-
ment. When thus God com-
municateth his bleſſings un-
to us, (as he ſtill doth in this
life) then we are ſaid to en-
joy him mediately. Second-
ly, we are ſaid to enjoy God
immediately, when he com-
municateth himſelſe unto
us without any other thing
between. And thus wee are
ſaid to enjoy God immedi-
ately

ately two wayes; 1. In respect of presence: and 2. In respect of influence. In respect of *presence*, our enjoying of God is said to be *immediate*, when wee live with him in the place of his residence, and where his honour dwelleth: and that is, in heaven-above, as *Solomon* saith to God; *Heare thou in heaven, thy dwelling place.* 1 *Kings* 8. 30, 39, 43, 49. For while wee live here in this world, wee are said to be *absent from the Lord*, because we are out of the place of his dwelling. 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. But when once we have left this world, and are gone to heaven, then we are said to be *present with the Lord*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. And then, saith
F 3 the

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the Apostle, *Wee shall ever be with the Lord. 1 Thes. 4. 17.* And from hence it is that the wicked are said to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. *2 Thes. 1. 9.* and that of the godly it is said, *Thou wilt shew me the path of life; for in thy presence is fulnesse of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psal. 16. 11.* and that where Christ is, there shall his disciples be also. *Ioh. 14. 2, 3.* and that they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. *Apor. 14. 4.*

Which speeches doe prove that the Saints in heaven do enjoy God in another manner then they here did,

did, while they lived in the
flesh: namely, that in hea-
ven they enjoy him in his
palace, in the place of his
proper dwelling, without
separation or distance of
place, which is found in all
them, which enjoy God
most nearely in this world.
And this also, as before I said
is implied in that saying of
the Gospell, *Blessed are the
pure in heart, for they shall see
God.* For this to be meant or
intimated by the *seeing of
God* in this place, may clear-
ly be gathered from other
places of Scripture, in which
it is said, that *now we see in a
glasse, but then wee shall see
face to face.* 1 Cor. 13. 12.
and in which we are said in
this life, *to walk by faith, and*

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not by sight. 2 Cor. 5. 7. He meaneth that here wee are led by an *inevident* and *obscure* kinde of knowledge; for so the Learned define faith to be, agreeably to that of the Apostle, *Faith is the evidence of things not seen.* Heb. 11. 1. but in heaven we shall walk or live *by sight*, having there the immediate and open view of Gods face in Glory. In heaven then, where all they, that are the blessed of God, shall bee, there men enjoy God immediately in respect of presence. Secondly, they enjoy him immediately in respect of *influence*. For there God communiceth himself unto them by immediate verue received from himselfe, with-

without the use of any
meanes. This is signified by
that in the Revelation,
where S. *Iohn* speaking of
the *Great City, the holy Ieru-*
salem, he saith of it; *And I*
saw no Temple therein; for the
Lord God almighty and the
Lamb are the Temple of it.
And the City had no need of
the sun, neither of the moon to
shine in it: for the glory of
God did lighten it, and the
Lamb is the light thereof.
Apoc. 21. 22, 23. Where
1. when he saith, *I saw no*
Temple in it; he giveth us to
understand, that in heaven
there will bee no use of the
outward meanes of salvati-
on. For if there be no Tem-
ple, then there are no priests
nor no preaching, nor no

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Sacraments, nor no solemn assemblies; for where there is need of these, there, there is use of a Temple also : In this world, where we are absent from the Lord, these things are necessary, and by them God communicates himselfe to his servants. But in the life to come *prophecy-
ing shall faile, and the use of
tongues shall cease, and the
meanes of knowledge and in-
struction shall vanish away ;*
as the Apostle speaketh :
1 Cor. 13. 8. 2. When hee
saith, that this City had no
need of the sun, nor of the
moone to shine in it; he imply-
eth that the outward meanes
of our naturall life should
cease. Here in this world
the sun giveth us light by
day,

day, and the moon by night;
and here meate and drink
do nourish us, and clothes
keep us warm: but in hea-
ven there will be no neede,
nor no use of such things: &
*The children of this world mar-
ry, and are given in mariage:
but they which shall be accoun-
ted worthy to obtain the world
to come, and the resurrection
from the dead, neither marry,
nor are given in mariage, nei-
ther die they any more. Luke
20. 34. By all which wee
learn that all natural meanes,
now used for preservation
of mans life, shall then be at
an end. 3. When S. Iohn
saith, There shall be no Temple
in it; for the Lord God and the
Lamb are the Temple of it:
and againe; There is no neede
of*

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of the sun, &c. for the glory of God doth shine in it, and the Lamb is the light of it : he giveth us the reason, why all outward helps and meanes are of no use there. It is not because there is no service of God used there ; for they shall sing praises to him without ceasing : nor it is not, because men there shall bee deprived of life and strength, and vigour ; for there they never dye, nor never hunger, nor never faint : but the reason is, because God and his Sonne Christ shall without any meanes, supply all good things unto them, by vertue derived immediately from themselves ; and that in a more plentifull and more excellent

excellent sort, then all secondary meanes or causes could do. This also is further signified by that of the Apostle, where he saith that *Christ shall deliver up his kingdome to God.—and shall himselve be subject unto God, that God may bee all in all.* I Cor. 15. 24, 28. that is, Christ shall cease to govern his Church in that manner of administration that now he useth; and God shall doe all by himselve. And by this it appeareth to be true, which I said in the second place; that in glory and in the state of heavenly blessednesse, we enjoy God immediately, both in respect of presence and in respect of influence.

C. Thirdly, I say yet further,

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ther, that this immediate fruition of God supplyeth unto the Blessed all good things, and expelleth or dri- veth away all evill. This the Scripture saith also. *S. Iohn* saith of the Saints in heaven, that God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes; and there shall bee no more death, neither sorow, nor crying; nei- ther shall there bee any more paine. *Apoc. 21. 4.* By this he signifieth the removing of all evill, or whatsoever might hurt or afflict. He go- eth on: and ver. 6. *I* (saith the great King) will give un- to him, that is a thirst, of the fountaine of the water of life freely. He that overcommeth shall inherite all things: and I will be his God; and he shall bee
my

my son; meaning that hee would give him all things necessary for blessednesse and an happy life.

And from hence it followeth that in the blessednesse of heaven, there is neither want of good, nor presence of any evill.

And now, these particulars laid together, the summe of them gathered into one, is, that the true blessednesse which is in heaven communicated to the Saints, is an *immediate fruition of God*, of and by himselfe supplying all good things, and expelling or driving away all evill things. And this may serve for clearing of the first question.

2. *Quest.* The second is, why

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why this blessednesse is ascribed or appropriated to the service of God.

Ans. To which question my answer is, blessednesse is ascribed to holinesse, or Gods service; partly because holinesse is a necessary condition for qualifying of those persons, which shall enjoy it: and partly, because it is a kinde of cause, that doth effect or procure it.

1. It is a necessary condition, &c. for so the Apostle teacheth us, when he saith; *Without holinesse no man shall see the Lord.* .i. (as before I explained the word) no man shall enjoy God in his glorious presence. *Heb. 12.6.* And so *S. Iohn*: *Blessed are they that doe his commandements, that*

that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City. For without are sorcerers and whoremongers, and murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Apoc. 22. 14. In which words; 1. When he saith, *Blessed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right, &c.* he intimateth that obedience to Gods will is a condition, upon supposall whereof men may attain this blessednesse. And 2. when he saith, *for without are sorcerers, &c.* Hee telleth us in plain termes, that no wicked man shall ever enter into heaven.

2. Holinesse and Gods service is a kinde of cause, that

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that procureth this blessednesse for them that serve God. *A kinde of cause* I call it by way of qualification or diminution; because it is neither any proper *efficient* cause, which by vertue in it selfe may effect it; nor any *meritorious* cause, which by its worthinesse can deserve it. And yet a cause it is, because it is an outward object, which moveth God for his promise sake, to confer heaven and happinesse upon them that doe serve him, and keep his commandments. This the Logicians call *causa procatartica*; or a morall cause, which worketh by way of object: and I did therefore call it a kinde of cause, because I am so warranted

ranted

ranted by the Apostle, who speaking of affliction born with patience and obedience to Gods will, saith of it, that it *worketh for us a farre more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

And if patience in affliction doe this, no man may deny the like to all other parts of obedience : and if they may be said to *work for us* eternall glory , then no man may hinder me to say, that they are a kinde of cause to procure this glory. I conclude then that Gods service is both a necessary condition, and a kinde of a cause, to procure blessednesse : and therefore to it blessednesse is rightly ascribed. And so the second question is answered.

3. *Quest.*

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3. *Quest.* The third question is, how may men bee said to be blessed in this life, in which we are absent from the Lord, and enjoy him not in such immediate sort, as hath been said.

Answ. I answer, as Cajetan doth, [*Hic in spe, in futuro in re,*] Here wee are blessed in hope, but shall be blessed indeed, in the world to come. For, as the Apostle saith of the beire in his minority, that though he differ nothing from a servant [in his present condition of subjection] yet hee is Lord of all; because he hath the right to all for the present, and shall have the possession of all, when the full time is come. *Gal. 4. 1.* so, and in the like sense, we who are

are subject to many crosses in this life, yet may bee said to be blessed, because now we have a right to that blessed estate, and shall in due time have the possession of it.

Thus much for this question, as also for the clearing of the whole point.

Vse 1. This serveth first to set an edge on our zeale, and to make us in love with heaven and eternall life, because here are such things as men do desire and seek after.

1. For first, men desire wealth and lands and abundance of needfull and usefull things. The labourer carrieth heavy burdens, and sweateth under his labour that

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that hee may earne wages, the shopkeeper forbearcs meate and drink and sleep, that hee may increase his gaine; the Merchant venturcth life and living, that he may make his stock great: and every man taketh pains, and endureth hardnesse, and undergoeth dangers, that he may become rich, or reap a plentiful reward, and they do it to obtain a corruptible treasure. But the blessednesse we have spoken of hitherto; hath plenty of all good things, without lack, without measure, without end. The *bags* here *wax not olde*; the *treasure* that is here, cannot bee eaten by the mothe, nor stollen by the thieve, nor wasted by continuance

nuance of time: nor can they either be taken from us, or we from them, by any casualty or mischance. And why then should wee think any paines too great, or any cost too much, or any danger too hard, by which going on in Gods service, wee may obtain such an unvaluable reward? Or if wee shrink at the thought of too much, at least let us do as much for heaven, as the labourer doth for his hire, or as the shop-keeper doth for his gaine, or as the Merchant doth for his estate. And if we will bee Christians, that professe Gods service to be our trade, and heaven and happinesse to be our reward; let us think it a shame, that they should

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should labour so constantly, and so chearefully for the commodities of this life, while wee grudge at every small labour in praying, and hearing, and examining the conscience, and mortifying of our carnall lusts; or while wee repine at every small summe bestowed for Gods service and for setting forth of his praise; or while we pull back and shrink at every petty losse in our estates, in our credit, in our pleasures and preferments; seeing by these meanes wee aspire to an incorruptible Crown, to an inheritance in heaven, and to a kingdome, that cannot be shaken.

2. All men desire and will endure much for freedom

dome from misery and grievances. Wee willingly lay out our money, and bestow our labour, that by providing meate and clothes and maintenance, we may avoid hunger and thirst and nakednesse. And wee part with lands and possessions and offices, that we may redeem our liberty, rather then lye in yrons, or be tyed to a Galley. And if there be any feare of our death by sicknesse or dangers; then *skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for saving of his life.*

But now this blessednesse of heaven, it hath freedome from all evils, and from all feare of danger. There (as hath been said) is no more

G

curse,

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curse, nor no more crying, nor no more death or sicknesse, or sorow, neither hunger, nor thirst, nor any thing to disquiet our peace. And for such a blessed and secure state, if we will not doe, what we would do for freedom out of prison, and to redeem our selves out of slavery, and to recover our selves from the stone or strangury, from the goutte or palsey, or from sicknesse and death; surely wee both overvalue these transitories, and undervalue heaven and happinesse, more then is tolerable in him who professeth himselfe to be a Christian, and God Almighty to bee his *exceeding great reward.*

3. Lastly,

3. Lastly, there is no man but if he ask his own heart, it will tell him, that happinesse is to be desired above all. In all ages there have been great disputes, and much difference about the matter of happinesse; some thinking it to consist in riches, and others in pleasures, and others in honours and preferments: but there was never any man, but did think and professe that true happinesse is the *summum bonum* the greatest good, that any man could have, or would desire. This is a principle so grafted in nature, that no disputes of philosophers, nor no differences of opinions could ever roote it out. But all Christians now know,

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that the true blessednesse is in the fruition of God in glory. And why then shou'd any Christian make more account of the vanities of the world, then of the happinesse of heaven? or why should wee stick at any labour, the fruit whereof will be eternall life? or why should we not desire heaven, with the losse of all things? with this consideration our Saviour stirred up his disciples to the hardest service : *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. Mat. 5. 10.* And with this consideration S. Paul animated himselfe to undergoe the greatest dangers; *Now behold:* (saith

(saith he) *I goe bound in the spirit unto Iernusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall there : saving that the holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life deare unto my selfe, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Iesus, to testifie the Gospell of the grace of God.* Acts 20. 22, 23, 24. And with this consideration * an holy Father of olde did encourage himselfe to pray for death, that he might the sooner enjoy God in his glory. Hee bemoned himselfe that he might not be admitted to see Gods face; but re-

G 3. mem-

August.
Solloc;
ca. 1 n. 3.

Cap. 4.

Bea Do-
mine:
meriar,
ut te vi-
deam; vi-
deam, ut
hic mor-
riar. No-
lo vivere,
volo mo-
ri; dissolvi
cupio, &
esse cum
Christo.

membring himselfe what he
had asked, & calling to mind,
that in the like case God an-
swered *Moses*, *Thou canst
not see my face: for no man can
see me, and live. Exod. 33. 20:*
He replied with great con-
fidence, why Lord, and is
that all, that I cannot see
thy face and live? I pray
thee then, *Lord, let mee die;
that I may see thy face: or, let
me see thee, that I may die in
this place. I would not live, I
would die*, that I might see
thee. Thus holy men of God
have been affected, who
knew and considered what
this blessednesse was. And
if we did rightly conceive,
what it were to enjoy God
in glory; wee would count
nothing so deare unto us, as
the

the favour of God in Christ, nor grudge to bee *bound in chaines for the hope of Israel*; and we would even wish to die presently, so we were sure upon our departure to bee with God. And what then should let us, by an holy life and works of Gods service, to *make our calling and election sure*: that whensoever our translation shall be (as, far off to the youngest of us it cannot be;) that then this *mortall, may put on immortality*, and we may live with God in glory for ever?

Vse 2. This may serve for comfort to all true Christians, who may hereby understand how blessed their state is. But especially it fitteth them, who together

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with a good conscience, do groan under some heavy crosse. Our Saviours instruction in this case to his disciples is, *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evill against you falsely for my sake. Reioyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven. Mat. 5. 11, 12.* Consider here, 1. what our Lord exhorteth them to, *Reioyce and be exceeding glad, when men shall revile you, &c.* 2. Upon what ground he requireth such rejoycing in so heavy a case, it is because they are now *blessed*; and yer long shall have a great reward in heaven: *Blessed are yee when men shall revile you, &c. for great is your*

your reward in heaven. And
so I may say to every poore
Christian, that had rather
have a small estate well got-
ten, then by ill meanesto in-
crease their wealth ; *Blessed*
are ye that are impoverished
for Christs sake : for great is
your reward in heaven. And
so of them, that refuse not a
nickname or reproach for
profession of the truth ;
Blessed are yee that are re-
proached for Christs sake : for
great is your reward in hea-
ven. And to them who had
rather lose a preferment, or
a great friend, then offend
God and a good conscience ;
Blessed are ye that are strip-
ped of your friends and means
for Christs sake : for great,
&c. And to them that had

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rather *endure* sicknesse and death, then seek to wisards, and soothfayers for recovery of health; Blessed are ye that are tortured with sicknesse and diseases for Christs sake: for great, &c. And so I would say (as by the like reason I may say) of all others who prefer the peace of their consciences before the profits and comforts of the world; They are blessed even while they are distressed for Christs sake; for great is their reward in heaven. And this, how should it comfort all disconsolate soules, who in the midst of troubles serve God without fainting? A learned and holy man of God, when a friend of his was pained with

with a grievous sicknesse,
wrote to comfort him in
these words; * *I marvell not,*
said he, that you are pained;
for you are sick: but I marvell
that you are impatient, who
have learned to know Christ
and to professe his Gospell.
For, *tell me, Patient* (said he)
how many stripes is heaven
worth? And then turning
his speech unto God, hee
prayeth, *Teach the Happy, O*
Lord, to see his happinesse
through troubles. Thus hee
comforted his sick friend:
and thus every Christian
that desireth to serve God,
may comfort himselfe, in
sicknesse, and travells, and
troubles: let him but think,
how much heaven is worth,
toward which he is sailing
in

* A letter
written
to ones
friend in
his sick-
nesse: in
the midst
of Master
Smiths
Sermons.

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in this tempest; and it will glad his soule in the midst of his greatest agonies. God give us grace to make use of such comforts, that in the end we may partake of his glory.

CAP. V.

Gods word hath vertue in it to make a man blessed.

OUr Lord in his correction of the womans speech, saith of the true blessednesse, that it is to be had by hearing and doing of Gods word: and thence it followeth, that Gods word hath vertue in it to make a man blessed. This is further proved to be so;

I. By

I. By Testimonies of Scriptures; such as these are. S. *Iohn* saith of his Gospell; *These things are written, that ye might beleeve, that Iesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that beleeving, ye might have life through his name. Ioh. 20. 31.* In these words S. *Iohn* telleth us, that he wrote his Gospell for this end, that men by it might be brought to beleeve in Christ, and to be saved. And from hence it followeth, that either the holy Ghost propounded to himselfe a wrong end in delivering this Gospell (which no Christian dareth imagin;) or else that this Gospell hath vertue in it to bring men to salvation. Again, S. *Paul* saith of the Gospel of Christ, that

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that it is the power of God to salvation, to every one that beleeueth. Rom. 1. 16. And S. Iames exhorteth, Receive with meeknesse the ingrafted word which is able to save your soules. Iames 1. 21. And our Saviour to the like purpose, Search the Scriptures, (saith hee) for in them yee think ye have eternall life: and they are they, that testifie of me. In all which sayings there is a saving vertue ascribed unto the Scriptures: and in this last, is intimated unto us, that it was the known opinion of Gods people in those dayes. Yee think, in them ye have eternall life, saith Christ. It is as if he had said, not I onely, but your selves also do agree, that eternall life

life is to bee found in the Scriptures : and therefore there is reason yee should search them.

2. The same truth may be gathered from the Titles, which are given to Gods word. It is called the Gospell of the *Grace* of God: *Acts* 20. 24. and the Gospell of the *Kingdome*. *Mat.* 4. 23. and the Gospell of *salvation*. *Ephes.* 1. 13. Implying that the grace of God, and the Kingdome of heaven, and salvation is there to be found; and from thence to be derived. Again, it is called the word of *Gods grace*. *Acts* 14. 3. and, the word of *reconciliation*. *2 Cor.* 5. 19. and the word of *salvation*. *Acts* 13. 26. and
1 *Pet.* 1. 23.

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1 Pet. I. 23. the *immortall* *seede*, by which we are new born. All which names and titles given to the word, what doe they else import, but that therein there is meanes contained to work grace and reconciliation and eternall life?

This is prooffe enough for the point: yet it will bee worth the labour to consider how Gods word may bee said to contain this vertue, and wherein it sheweth it selfe. And thereto the answer is, that this vertue of Gods word sheweth it selfe by three things: 1. By teaching the ready way to blessednesse. 2. By perswading men to walk in that way. And 3. by enabling them with

with grace both to beleeve what it teacheth, and to do what it perswadeth.

I. It teacheth the right way; or, it teacheth what to beleeve, how to live, and by what meanes we may be saved. So S. Paul saith of this word, that *it is able to make one wise to salvation through faith in Christ Iesus : and that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproofe, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.* 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. In these words we have three things to be noted for this purpose. First, there is the main scope and end, for which the Scripture serveth : namely, to make one

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one wise to salvation. Secondly, there are the particular uses of this word, by which it maketh men wise to salvation : and they bee these ; first it is profitable for *doctrine*, to teach whatsoever we neede to beleeve. Secondly, for *reproofe*; or, to confute and detect all contrary errors, that gainsay the doctrine of truth. Thirdly, for *correction*, or to reprove all sins that are against Gods will, manifested in his word. Fourthly, for *instruction* in righteousness, or to inform us in every duty belonging to our callings. In summe, it teacheth the *truth*, which we ought to beleeve, and the *duties* that we must perform, with conviction and confuta-

confutation of whatsoever is contrary to either of these two: so that wee may neither be misled with any error against the faith, nor misperswaded to any sin against Gods Law. These be uses for which the Scripture is profitable. Thirdly, there is the sufficiency or ability which men gain by these uses; and that is, that the *Man of God*, even he that is bound to know, and do most, may want no direction, that may serve either for instructing of his faith, or ordering of his life. Now by all this we have a punctuall and plentifull description of the doctrinall vertue contained in Gods word. If any desire further consent of other

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ther Scriptures, he may take that of David, *Thy word is a lanterne to my feete, and a light unto my pathes.* Psal. 119. 105. and that of Solomon, *All the words of my mouth are in righteousness: there is nothing froward or perverse in them:* and that of Isay, *To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* Isay 8. 20. and that of our Saviour, *Do not ye erre, because ye know not the Scriptures?* Mar. 12. 24. By all which, as by other like places of Scripture, it is cleare, that the Scriptures shew the right way, and the ignorance of Scriptures is the cause that men erre and goe astray out of the way.

I I. Secondly,

to make one blessed.

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II. Secondly, the word of God containeth blessednesse in it, because it affordeth arguments of *perswasion*, and by them doth win our assent to walk in that way. And that it doth 3. wayes; 1. By loving invitations, such as these are; *I beseech you by the mercifulnes of God, &c. Rom. 12.1.* and *God doth beseech you by us*, and *We pray you in Christs stead, Bee yee reconciled unto God. 2 Cor. 5.20.*

2 It perswadeth by gracious *promises* of much good to be obtained; such as these are; *Keep sound wisdom and discretion. So shall they be life unto thy soule, and grace unto thy neck. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep*

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sleep shall be sweete. Bee not a-
fraid of sudden feare, neither
of the desolation of the wicked
when it commeth. For the Lord
shall be thy confidence, and shall
keep thy foot from being taken.
Prov. 3. 21. &c. and such is
that of Moses: Blessed shalt thou
be in the City and in the field.
Blessed shall be the fruit of thy
body, &c. Deut. 28. 2. &c.
and that of our Saviour;
There is no man, that hath left
house, or brethren, or sisters, or
father, or mother, or wife, or
children, or lands for my sake
and the Gospels : but hee shall
receiue an hundred fold now in
this time, houses and brethren,
&c. and in the world to come
eternall life. Mar. 10. 29, 30.
3. It perswadeth by threat-
ning of plagues and punish-
ments

to make one blessed.

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ments against all disobedience and sin, such as these are; If thou shalt corrupt thy selfe, and shalt do evill in the sight of the Lord thy God, &c. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land, wherunto yee goe to possesse it. Deut. 4. 26. and that of the Apostle, God will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. and that of our Saviour at the last judgement; Then shall he say to them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting

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*lasting fire, prepared for the de-
vill and his Angells. Mat. 25.*

41.

These and such like bee
the arguments of perswasion
which the Scriptures use to
keep us in the way of righ-
teousnesse, and to bring us
to eternall life. And he that
hath the heart of a man in
him, and is not moved with
such reasons; hath in the
shape of a man cast off all
humanity and reason. If in-
treates by the mercies of
God in Christ Jesus, move
us not, wee are more un-
thankfull then many brutes
be, which attend on their
Masters, by whom they are
fed. If promises of rewards
and happinesse do not move
us, we may be thought in-
sensible

insensible of our owne welfare. And if punishments and plagues, especially the *worme that dyeth not, and the fire that never is quenched*, if these move us not, how far short doe wee come of the wisdom that is in the dogg and the horse, and the asse, all which are forced to obedience by the rod, and the spurre and the whip, even when they are but threatned against them. And consequently, if these many forcible perswasions contained in Gods word, do not worke with us to the obedience of Gods will, the complaint will bee just against us, that was used against the Jews; *What could have beene done more in my*

H

wine-

Cap. 5. vineyard, that I have not done it it? Wherefore, when I looked, that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wilde grapes? *Is. 5. 4.*

III. Thirdly, there is a vertue of blessednesse in Gods word, because where it is preached, it bringeth with it that grace of God, which being entertained by us, doth enable us both to beleewe what it teacheth, and to performe what it perswadeth unto. The proofes of this point are gathered to my hands, by our learned *Divines* of great Britaine, who were a chiefe part of the *Dort-Councell*. And as they have set them downe, so I shall relate them from their pen. * They having
said

* Suffr.
de 5. art.
thesi 5.
pag. 30.

to make one blessed.

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said two things in their position, 1. that together with the preaching of the Gospell some measure of grace is offered.

2. that it is so much as may convince men of contempt or negligence, if they be not reformed by it; they add for prooffe of the former, that it is plaine out of Scriptures: and from thence they alledge, Isa. 59. ult. *This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit, that is upon thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth from henceforth and for evermore.*

Upon which words they comment to this purpose, *Hinc patet, From hence it is plaine, that the Word and the Spirit, are * inseparably, by*

H 2 Gods

Individuo ne-
xu.

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Gods promise, joyned together in the ministry of the word. And from hence, say they, the ministers of the new Testament, are called the ministers not of the letter, but of the spirit, not of the killing letter, but of the quickning spirit. 2 Cor. 3. 6. And the ministry of the Gospel is called the ministration of the spirit, v. 8. Hence also the Gospel is called Grace that bringeth salvation. Tit. 2. 11. & the word of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5. 19. And Luk. 10. 9, 11. When Christ sent his seventie disciples to preach the Gospel, he commanded them to say to their hearers; The Kingdome of God is come nigh unto you; doubtleffe, because supernatural grace was administred to those men, to whom the Gospel was
prea-

to make one blessed.

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preached. Againe, for prooffe of the 2. point, that there is so much grace offered, as may convince them of contempt, who doe not beleeve and obey; the same learned men alledge that of our Saviour, Ioh. 15. 22. *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sinne; but now they have no cloke for their sin.* From this place it is plaine, say they, that Christ in propounding of the Gospell, did also administer that internall grace, which was thus far sufficient, that because they did not accept but reject the Gospell, they might be convinced of positive infidelity. They add that also, Ioh. 3. 19 *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darknesse rather*

H 3

then

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then light. Men therefore are justly damned for rejecting the light of the Gospell. Heb. 2. 3. How shall wee escape, if we neglect so great salvation? for neglecting salvation offered in the Gospell, (as they comment upon the words) wee become guilty of just punishment. Therefore salvation is offered in the Gospell. These with some more, bee the proofes brought by these learned men. And they plainly prove, that God doth accompanie the preaching of his word with the assistance and grace of his Spirit; that men, who heare the word, if themselves bee not in fault, do receive from God, both to beleeve and obey it.

Now

Now lay these things together, first, that the word of God doth teach the right way to blessednes; then that it useth powerfull perswasions to incite us on in this way; and lastly, that it bringeth with it that grace of God. which may carie us along to our journeys end: and then the conclusion will easily result from them, that therefore Gods word hath much vertue in it, and that which is sufficient to make us eternally happy.

Vse 1. This condemneth them of follie, who leave Gods word, and seeke other directions to eternall life. Such were the Jews of old, and such have beene some ignorant papists in our time.

H 4

What

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What our vulgar papists are used to say for prooffe of the true religion ; they that have lived among them, do sufficiently know : and what the Jews said in former times , *Ieremie* hath told us at large, chap. 44. And whoso shall attentively consider his words will easily see, how like our papists are to those Jews. The words of the Prophet are , *Then all the men , which knew that their wives had burnt incense unto other Gods, and all the women that stood by—answered Ieremiah, saying ; As for the word, which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly doe whatsoever thing goeth forth out of*

our

to make one blessed.

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our own mouth, to burn incense to the Queene of heaven, and to poure out drinck-offerings unto her, as we have done, we & our fathers, our Kings & our Princes, in the cities of Iudah and in the streets of Ierusalem: for then had we plentie of victualls and were well, and saw no euill. But since wee left off to burne incense to the Queene of heaven, and to poure out drinck offerings unto her, wee have wanted all things, & have beene consumed by the sword and by the famine. Ier. 44. 15. &c. In this passage of the Prophet there are 2. things set downe, the resolution of this people, and their reason for it. Their resolution was, that they would not hearken to the word which the Pro-
H 5 phet

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phet had spoken in the name of the Lord: but they would doe what they did doe, that is, they would burne incense to the Queene of heaven, &c. And the like is the resolution of some seely people. Say what you will, or what you can out of Scriptures, they care not for it: but they will doe, what they are woont to doe; that is, they will pray in a tongue, whereof they understand never a word; they will worship Saints and Images, though they know not why; and they will rest their faith on the Popes dictats, though they can say nothing why he may not misleade them. But this they doe, and this they will do. This is their resolution.

solution. Secondly, we may consider their *reason*, why they were so wilfull, and that is two-fold; 1. because they and their fathers had beene accustomed to doe so heretofore. *As wee have done; wee and our fathers, &c.* and so our poore ignorant people; This is the religion, where in I was borne and bred; and therein will I dye. Thus my father and grandfather beleevd before I was born; and I will folow them, who have gone before mee. The second reason, why they would continue in their resolution is, because when they lived in that faith, they had *plentie of victuals* and store of all things; but after they left their sacrificing to Idols.

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phet had spoken in the name of the Lord: but they would doe what they did doe, that is, they would burne incense to the Queene of heaven, &c. And the like is the resolution of some feely people. Say what you will, or what you can out of Scriptures, they care not for it: but they will doe, what they are woont to doe; that is, they will pray in a tongue, whereof they understand never a word; they will worship Saints and Images, though they know not why; and they will rest their faith on the Popes dictats, though they can say nothing why he may not misleade them. But this they doe, and this they will do. This is their resolution.

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Idols, they had scarfitie, and miserie and want. *Then say they, we had plentie of victuals, &c.* And so are our feelie ones wont to dispute. Oh, say they, when the old religion was on foote, then we had so many eggs for a peny, and so much provision at a small price, and poore men were able to live by their labours: but since Calvin and Luther began to reforme, we have scarfitie and dearth, and it is a hard world, to live in. Thus our people are wont to reason, for their old superstitions and errours: and they speak so right in the very phrase and words of the idolatrous Jews, that I might have thought they had borrowed
their

their discourse out of *Jeremy*, but that I know it is not their custome to reade so much in the Bible: that they leave to these new men, accounting it as the booke of Heretikes, and Novelists. A Ladies Psalter liketh them better for a prayer booke then *Dauids* Psalmes, and a festivall or Legend they esteeme a better booke for instruction, then the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. But now, if Gods word do teach the right way to heaven; I pray you, in what way are they who leave Gods word to bee guided by such fantasies and fables? Let *Jeremie* be the judge: *Then Jeremie said to the men, and to the women—who had*

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had given him this answere,
The incense, which yee burnt
in the cities of Iudah, and in
the streets of Ierusalem, ye and
your fathers—did not the Lord
remember them, and came it
not into his minde: so that the
Lord could no longer beare, be-
cause of the evil of your doings,
and because of the abominati-
ons, which ye have committed?
Therefore is your land a desola-
tion and an astonishment, and a
curse, without an inhabitant,
as at this day. Because ye have
burnt incense, and because ye
have sinned, &c. Therefore
this evill is happened unto you.
Ier. 44. 28, &c. In which an-
swere we may consider, and
it is worth the noting, that
their burning of incense, to
the Queene of heaven, and
their

their pouring out of drink-offerings unto her, which they thought was the true worship, and said it was the onely cause of their *plentie of victuals* and of all good things; was in very deede an abomination to God, which hee could no longer beare, and the true cause of the desolation & curse that was come upon them. And so, when our ignorant people say, that the reformed religion is the cause of scarcity and want, & that while they worshipped their images and Saints, there was plentie and store: wee may answer them according to the tenor of the Prophets words; Nay rather, your superstitions, in burning incense

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cense to the Queene of heaven, as they did; and your wilfulnesse in refusing the truth, when it is brought unto you, as they also did; these and such like abominations are the cause, that ye, and we for your sakes, doe suffer at Gods hands, as they did in the case before us. But as for such as know and serve God better, and acknowledge Gods word to teach the right way: if any dotrell shall tell them of cheapnesse of victualls, and example of forefathers, and their owne idle customes, as rules to guide their faith by; let them answer them in the wise mans words, *Say not thou, what is the cause, that the former daies were*

were better then these ? for thou doest not enquire wisely concerning this. Eccl. 7. 10. Or else, let them return such men an answer out of the Prophet, *To the Law and to the Testimony : if they speake not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. 8. 20.* And so I leave their errour ; and come to say some thing of our owne failings.

Vse 2. Secondly then, if Gods word have such vertue in it, both to perswade and enable us to Gods service ; we may hence take notice of our great negligence, who having had so long use of this word, have profited so little by it. For, if a childe have good and wholesome meate,

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meate, & yet do not thrive, nor grow by it; ye will say, and ye have great cause to say, that he is out of temper, and somewhat is amisse with him. And if a sick man have good and soveraigne medicines given him, and yet is not purged, nor eased by them; ye will say that either nature is much decayed in her strength, or much oppressed by bad humours. And so, seeing Gods word hath in it such vertue towards godlinesse and a happy life; if we, after long use of it, are not bettered in our knowledge of God, and increased in our obedience to his Laws, and some way or other furthered toward heaven and happinesse, it is
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an evident signe that grace is decayed in us, and sinne hath gotten the upper hand. And yet so it falleth out many times among Christians. The Hebrews were *dull of hearing*, and *when for the time they might have beene teachers*, yet they had neede that one should teach them againe, which were the first principles of the oracles of God. Heb. 5. 11, 12. And is it not so with a great many of us? Are there not men and women, who after many years teaching, have gained no great measure of true learning? If by the Catechismes they have been taught, and by the Sermons that they have heard, and by the Scriptures and other bookes which

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which they have read, they had learned but every week, nay every moneth, one only good lesson, apperraining to godlinesse, they might by this time have proved skilfull Casuists in matters of conscience. But this is not so great a defect as that which followeth. Our knowledge is much more better then our practice. God complained of his vineyard (and that vineyard was the house of Israel) that after much care and paines bestowed in the dressing, in steede of good grapes, which were rightly expected from it, it brought forth wilde grapes. *Isa. 5.4.* The meaning is, as the Prophet expoundeth it *v. 7.* *He looked for judgement, and behold*

to make one blessed.

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*hold oppression, and for righteousness, but behold a cry; even a cry for wrongs and oppressions, & injuries done to their neighbours. And now a dayes, may not God complaine of us in like manner? There was never more dressing of Gods Vineyard, then now there is: more instructions to teach the way of blessednesse, more exhortations to laye hold upon eternall life, or more threatenings to deterre men from sinne. But may not God say now after all this, I looked for grapes, fruits of righteousness and holinesse and of a sober life: but I finde wilde grapes, of lying, and of coufening, & of oppressing, and of flandering, and of surfer-
ting,*

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ting, and drunkenneſſe, and of new fantaſtick faſhions. And if theſe be the fruits of our hearing and reading and profeſſing; we may feare, leſt that threatning may be ours alſo; *This will I doe to my vineyard, I will take away the hedge thereof, and it ſhall bee eaten up; and breake downe the wall thereof, and it ſhall be troden downe. And I will lay it waſte: it ſhall not bee pruned, nor digged, but there ſhall come up briars and thornes. I will alſo command the clouds, that they raine no raine upon it.* ver. 5. and 6. He meaneth that after ſo much labour loſt, hee would take away the meanes of grace, and leave them to themſelves; which is a fearefull judgement, not
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to be thought on, without trembling. It will bee our wisdom then to look every one into his owne garden, & see what fruits he findeth there. If we finde there any grapes of gall, or vine-sets of Sodom; or if our wine prove the poison of dragons or the venom of aspes: it will be high time to take the pruning knife, and cutt off these wilde branches, that beare such bad fruits, or rather to take the pick axe and the mattock and to grub up the plants, on whose rootes they grow: that wee may bee trees of righteousness, bringing forth fruits answerable to the labour bestowed upon us.

Vse 3. If there bee such
vertue

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vertue in Gods word to make a man blessed, we should learne to esteeme it as our happinesse, when wee doe enjoy it. So *David* did, *I rejoyce for thy word*, (saith he) *as one that findeth great spoiles.* *Psal. 119. 162.* On which words a good writer giveth us this note, that *David* compareth the enjoying of Gods word to the getting of *great spoiles*, rather then to the having of any other riches, because spoiles taken from enemies do not onely enable men with wealth, but honour them also with triumphs of victorie. And so wee should esteeme of the word of Gods grace, as a treasure that doth farre exceede both riches and whatsoever

soever else that cannot bring us to heaven and happinesse.

And from this esteeme we may learne three duties ;

1. To praise God , that hath given us such a treasure. So *David* did ; In a Psalm of his, which was framed for a forme of thanksgiving to God , and therefore he both beginneth it and endeth it with , *Praise ye the Lord* : in this Psal. he reckoneth this as a chiefe mercy for which he giveth God thanks, that he *shewed his word unto Iacob ; his statutes , and his judgments unto Israel. Ps. 147. 19.* And so we should reckon it, as one of Gods rich mercies towards us, that wee have such plentie of his word, that may bring us to blessed-
I n e s s e

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nesse & eternall life : and in remembrance hereof both begin our morning and shut up our evening, as *David* began and ended his Psalme, with *Praise wee the Lord.*

2. We may learn, to use all good meanes to get this treasure into our owne possession, *that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly in all wisdom*, as the Apostle speaketh *Coloff. 3. 16.* Solomons counsell for attaining this wisdom, is that wee seeke for it, *as for silver; and search for it, as for hid treasure. Prov. 2. 4.* Hee intimateth in this speech, that if any of us did know, that there were a mine of gold to be found by seeking, wee would be glad it were in our own ground, wee

wee would moreover digge the earth & hew the rocks, and draine the marishes, that nothing might hinder our obtaining of that treasure. And in such maner would Solomon have us to labour for the knowledge of God, that lyeth hid in his word. Young people should desire to be catechised, old people to be further instructed, and all both yong and olde should willingly undergoe that paines whatever it bee, that may open the Mine, and bring us to the sight and possession of this treasure.

3. If there bee any of us who have children, whose happinesse wee doe desire; we learne from hence to

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lay the foundation thereof, in the knowledge of Gods word. Moses commanded parents, that they should *teach their children* upon every occasion, and acquaint them with Gods word and his commandements; promising them that then their *dayes, and the dayes of their children, should be multiplied in the land—as the dayes of heaven, Deut. II. 19, 21.* And so if ye would leave a good portion indeede for your children, and provide that they may live long upon earth, and eternally in heaven: catechise them in the principles of Gods word, sow the seedes of godlinesse in their tender mindes, and teach them how to follow the

the directions of Gods Law; and this will give them instructions to know the right way, and will follow them with exhortations to goe on in the way, and will never leave them, till it give them possession of heaven and eternall glory.

C A P. V I.

*Hearing of Gods word Read, is
a meanes of blessednesse.*

Hitherto hath beene declared, how the word of God containeth vertue in it, to make a man blessed. Our Lord goeth on to tell us how this vertue may be conveyed and communicated unto us; to wit, by Hearing and Keeping of it.

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Blessed, saith he, are they that beare the word of God & keep it.

I begin with hearing, and hereof, there are two kinds mentioned in Scripture; an hearing of the word read, as it is delivered in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles; and an hearing of the word preached, as it is unfolded and applied by the ordinarie Minister, sent of God, for that purpose. Of both these it is true, that they are meanes, by which the blessednes of Gods word may bee conveyed unto us, and therefore both are necessary to bee considered in their place and order.

First then I say, that hearing of the word read out of the Scriptures, is a meanes

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to make a man blessed, or to communicate blessednesse unto him.

I. This is proved first by Testimonies of Scriptures: I will insist onely upon two.

1. The first is, that of Moses, *Deut. 31. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.* The words are; *Moses wrote this Law, and delivered it to the Priests, the sonnes of Levi;—And commanded them saying, At the end of every seven yeares, in the solemnitie of the yeare of Release, in the feast of Tabernacles; When all Israel is come to appeare before the Lord thy God, in the place which hee shall choose: Thou shalt reade this Law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men and women and children, and the*

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stranger that is within thy gates ; that they may heare, and that they may learne, and feare the Lord your God, and observe to doe all the words of this Law : and that their children, which have not known any thing, may heare and learn to feare the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land, whither ye goe over Iordan to possesse it. In these words we may note for this purpose these things : 1. what Moses did : & that is (1.) he wrote this Law, towit that which God had delivered unto him for the instruction of his people : & (2.) he delivered it to the Priests, that it might be for the use of the Church. And this sheweth that the law whereof Moses speaketh

speakeeth, was the written word of God committed to the Church. 2. Wee may consider what Moses commanded the Priests to doe: and that is, that they should *reade* this Law to the people. And this is illustrated and amplified by 3. things: (1.) by the *solemnity* of the time, when it should bee read, towit in the great feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel were to bee present. (2.) By the *universality* of the persons, in whose hearing it should bee read; and they are specified to bee *men, women, and children*, as well strāgers as natives. (3.) Why, or for what end the Law was to bee read to all these sorts of men, gathered in

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such multitudes. And the ends are diverse one subordinate to an other, each former serving as a meanes for that which commeth after, and all of them tending and conducing to an happie life: the first is that they might *heare* it, the next, that by hearing they might *learn* it; & the last that by hearing and learning, they might bee brought to *feare God, and observe and doe all the words of that Law*. Now laie these together that Moses wrote this Law, and the Priests read this Law, and the people, all of them, heard this Law written and read unto them, by Gods appointment; and all this, for this end and purpose, that the people might feare God

God and keepe his commandements ; and they plainly prove that the hearing of the word written and read , is an approved meanes to an holy , and consequently to an happy life also. For hee that so heareth the word , that *he is a doer of the worke , is blessed in his deede. Iam. 1. 25.*

2. The second testimony is that of the Prophet *Ier. 36. 5, 6, 7.* *Ierem. commanded Baruch saying, I am shutt up ; I cannot goe into the house of the Lord. Therefore goe thou, and reade in the Roll ; which thou hast written from my mouth , the words of the Lord in the eares of the people , in the Lords house, upon the fasting day : and also thou shalt reade them*

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them in the eares of all Iudah, that come out of their cities. It may be, they will present their supplication before the Lord; and will returne every one, from his evill way. In this passage when it is said, that *Jeremie* being restrained that himselfe could not preach, did therefore command *Baruch* (and that by Gods appointment as appeareth *vers. 2, 3.*) to reade *Jeremies* words in a written Roll; this sheweth both that the people did heare the word written, and that it was a duty of consequence and moment. And secondly, when he saith, It may bee, they will present their supplication, & returne:—this implieth, that though there might

might be some doubt of the
successe, because of the ob-
stinacy of the people; Yet
this was a likely way, and
God made choise of it for
that purpose, that they
might relent, and repent,
and amend their evill waies,
and obtaine pardon, as is
more plainly signified v.3.
And this againe proveth,
that the hearing of the
word, is a meanes to re-
claime men from sinne, and
to procure their pardon;
and consequently to make
them blessed. *For blessed is
he* (saith David) *whose trans-
gression is forgiven, and whose
sinne is covered.* Psal. 32. 1.
And thus much for Testi-
monies.

I I. Secondly, the same
truth

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truth is proved by the constant practice and custome of Gods Church, who from time to time have still caused the Scriptures to be read to the people, according as was prescribed by *Moses* in the Law. So for example, *Moses* who wrote that Law for others, did observe it himselfe. *He tooke the booke of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: as himselfe saith, Exod. 24. 7. Ioshua did the like: He read all the words of the Law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the booke of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Ioshua read not before all the Congregation of Israel, with the women & the litte*

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them. Iosh. 8. 34, 35. And in the new Testament it is further said, that Moses was read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day. Act. 15. 21. and chap. 13. 27. the like is said of the Prophets, that they were read every Sabbath day: and v. 15. there is mention made of reading both of them together. After the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the Rulers of the Synagogue sent unto them (to wit to Paul, and his fellows, being now present at their service in the Synagogue; as it is vers. 14.) and invited them to use some exhortation unto the people. By which passage it appeareth to

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a: Bux-
dorf. de
Abbrev.
Hebr. tit.
de Paraf-
chis pag.
249. Jo.
Gerhard.
Epiſt. de-
dic. præ-
fixâ ho-
miliis do-
minical.
Serar. in
Maccab.
pag. 613,
614. Lo-
rin. in
Deuter.
31. 10, 11,
12, 13.

to have been the usuall cu-
stome of that Church, that
both that Law of *Moses* and
the writings of the Prophets
were read to the people for
their instruction. Which cu-
stome the (4) learned tell us
was observed in this maner.
The Law, that is the five
books of *Moses* they divided
into 53. Sections, and every
week they read one of them
for the first lesson; that so
once a yeare they might
reade it all over. And out of
the Prophets they gathered
as many Sections, which
were of like argument to
those of the Law, and those
they read as second lessons
answerable in matter to the
former. These Sections and
lessons both in the Law and
the

the Prophets are distinguished and noted out in the Hebrew Bible, by which every one may see, what portions of the Bible were read every Sabbath to the people. The like custome hath beene observed in the Christian Churches also.

(b) *Cassian* telleth us that in those ancient times, the Religious Fathers, after the reading of the Psalmes did add *geminas Lectiones, unam veteris, & aliam novi Testamenti*, 2. Lessons, one out of the old, & an other out of the new Testament. By which words wee may learne, that the custome now used in our Churches, was begun in the time of the primitive Church; onely with this
disse-

b *Cassian*
Institut.
li. 2. c. 6.
& *Gaz.*
ibid.

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difference, that whereas we now a daies do constantly reade our lessons, one out of the olde and an other out of the new; they on the Saterdaies and Sundaies (for in those olde times, they kept both of them as holy dayes;) appointed and read both the lessons out of the new Testament. By all which it appeareth that the Church of God in all ages have still beene accustomed to reade the Text of the Scriptures to the people: the reason cannot bee imagined to be any other, then this, that the people by hearing the Scriptures read might learne to serve God aright, and by his service might obtaine eternall life.

And

And this proverth, that in all ages, the hearing of the Scriptures read hath been esteemed as an ordinary way to blessednes & immortal life.

III. Thirdly, this point may further bee proved, and made more cleare by considering the benefits and helps that a good Christian may reape by hearing the word read. And they bee these and such like.

I. It serveth to acquaint the people of God with the history of the Church, and Gods dealing with it. For example, they may heare in the olde Testament how God created the world, punished Adam and Eve for their disobedience, drowned the whole world for their over-

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overflowing sins, excepting *Noah* and his househould, whom he had found upright in that wicked generation: how hee destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven, delivered the people of *Israel* out of the hand of the Egyptians, led them through a vaste wilderness into a fruitfull land, dryed up the river *Jordan* and the red Sea, to make a passage for his chosen ones; with many mo such occurrences, which ech one may learne by the hearing of the Text read, and by them may understand the goodnesse of God, the ingratitude of most men, and the dutie of all; with many others points of instructi

structions conducing to-
wards a blessed life. Againē,
in the new Testament, if
men heare the first chapters
of S. *Matthew* read they
will learne, that CHRIST
our LORD was borne of a
Virgin, persecuted by *Herod*,
honored by the wise men,
and miraculously preserved
against those that sought his
life. If they proceede further
to the following chapters,
there they will heare, what
miracles our Lord wrought,
what doctrines of religion
he taught, what tentations
he endured, and how hee
lived from the Cradle to
the Crosse. And if they con-
tinue their hearing till the
end of the Gospell bee fi-
nished, they may acquaint
them-

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themselves with the maner of his Passion, and his Buriall, and his Resurrection, and his Ascension into heaven: all maine points of the Christian Faith, and such as every one ought to beleeeve for the saving of his soule. And yet further, by hearing the history of the Acts, and the Epistles of the Apostles, they may see, how the Apostles preached to the Gentiles, planted the Churches, healed the sick, converted the Nations, and suffered great wrongs for their masters sake. The knowledge of all which, will both guide us in the way to heaven, and spurre us forward, to go on towards eternall life. For as *David*, after hee had rehearsed

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heard Gods dealings with the ancient Fathers, concludeth in the end of all, *Whoso is wise and will observe these things; they shall understand the loving kindnesse of the Lord. Ps. 107. 43:* So may I say of these and the like passages in Gods word, that whoso is *wise*, and when hee hath heard them, will consider them; they shall understand the wisdome, and power, and goodnesse and providence of God in the ordering of his Church, together with his justice & severitie against all them, that would not be reclaimed and amended; and hereby receive instruction for their owne soules.

2. Secondly, the hearing
of

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of the Scriptures read, may serve to teach us many necessary duties of piety and an holy life. Every one of us may learne somewhat hereby, that may direct us how to serve God, how to honor our Superiours, how to governe our inferiours, and how to behave our selves towards all men. For though the full & distinct unfolding of these points bee left to the learned preacher, who is therefore brought up in Scholasticall studies, that he may be able to instruct the people in the sense of Scriptures and in the duties of their calling, more perfectly then they could possibly learne by their owne industrie; Yet even of themselves,

selves, by hearing the word read, with attention, they may understand a good part of their dutie both towards GOD and men. For who is there even among the meanest Christians, but if he heare the 20. chapter of *Exodus* read, will presently resolve with himselfe, that hee is bound to reverence his parents, not to kill or strike his neighbour, not to wrong him in his wife, in his goods, or in his good name? Or, who that shall heare the 13. chapter to the *Romans* read, but will presently conceive that it is his duty to obey the Magistrate? Or, if he heare the 5. and 6. chapters to the *Ephesians*, but will know by the very

K words,

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words, that he is bound to do faithfull service to his master, if he bee a servant; to be kinde to his wife, if he bee a married man; and dutiful to his parents, if he be a childe that is under government, and carefull for the education of his children, if he bee a father of sonnes or daughters? And the like may be said of other the like cases. All which shew, that the hearing of Scriptures read may availe a man much to the leading of an holy life. The further illustration whereof may be had out of some few examples. First then, *Athanasius* an ancient Doctor of the Church, telleth of *S. Antonie*, that having first
 revol-

Athanas.
 in vita S.
 Anto.iii
 pag. 445.

revolved in his minde, how
the Apostles forsooke all
and followed CHRIST, he
came into the Church and
in the Gospell which was
then read, he heard the say-
ing of our Saviour to the
yong rich man, *If thou wilt be
perfect, sell all that thou hast,
and give to the poore, and
come and follow me: and thou
shalt have treasure in heaven.*
Matt. 19. 21. And as soone,
as hee had heard that sen-
tence, hee went home and
sould his possessions, and
gave them to the poore, and
leaving all further care of
the world, he betooke him-
selfe wholly to a devout life.
Secondly, *S. Augustin* telleth
of himselfe, that having
heard of this storie of saint

K 2 *Antonie,*

August.
Confess.
lib. 8. cap.
12. pag.
37.

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Antonie, how he by hearing the Gospell read was converted to God ; hee in imitation of this holy man, tooke up the booke that lay by, to reade, (for hearing of Gods word read, and reading of it, do not much differ in this respect ;) and opening the booke at all adventure, he read what first came to hand, and that was the saying of the Apostle, *Let us walke honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkennes, not in chambering and wantonnesse, not in strife and envying, &c. Rom. 13.13.* Part of which words did so strike his heart, that he presently forsook his loose life, and betooke himselfe to Gods service. Thirdly, the booke

booke of God it selfe telleth us, that *Iosias* having heard the words of the Law read, which threatened judgment against such sinnes, as were then too common among them; *He humbled himselfe, & rent his clothes, and wept before the Lord, and caused the booke to be read in the audience of the people:* and both hee and they moved by the hearing of the booke read made a covenant with the Lord for conversion and amendment of life; as is recorded in the 2. booke of *Kings*, in the end of the 22. and in the beginning of the 23. chapter. By these examples wee learne, that if men come to the hearing of the word read, with honest & teacheable hearts;

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as these good men d d, they may heare that by the sole reading of the text, by which they may be brought to repentance for their sins, and a carefull and devout service of the Lord their God, as these holy men were before them.

3. Thirdly, the hearing of the word read (if it be heard with attention and reverence, as it alwaies should) will prepare and fitt peoples mindes for a profitable hearing of Sermons.. For when the Preacher in handling any point, shall alledge the Text; he that hath beene an attentive hearer of the word read, and hath imprinted the sayings of Scripture in his minde; will remember and
acknow.

acknowledge the words, as they are cited & explained: and hereby hee will gaine these helps towards a godly life. 1. Hee will learne the sense and meaning of hard places, if any be expounded, & unfolded by the Preacher, which himseife understood not before. 2. he will be able, as his minde goeth along with the preachers words, in part to judge of the truth & soundnesse of his allegations; and afterward more fully and exactly to examine the things that were spoken, as the *Bereans* examined *S. Pauls doctrine whether those things were so*, as hee had said. And lastly, he will be enabled to remember every thing that is said, the better;

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a good part of the Sermon being settled in his memory by his former reading, and the rest having neare coherence with it, and dependance on it. And he that is furnished with these abilities, will easily profit by all that the preacher teacheth. But contrariwise, he that heareth Texts alledged in a Sermon, which he had never heard of before, can neither judge of the sense, that is put upon them, nor understand the sequels that are deduced from them, nor remember to any purpose what hath beene alledged out of them. I conclude then, that he who will profit by the word preached; must not neglect to heare the word read, that hee

hee may imprint the sentences of the Scripture in his minde.

4. Fourthly, by hearing the word read though sometimes we understand not the meaning, yet we may at least fasten the words in our memories: & if we carrie away but the words and phrases onely, we may thereby bee occasioned to ask direction from others, who understand them better. The Eunuch, when he read the Prophecie of *Isa*, understood it not: but was hereby moved to enquire of the meaning of the Text. *I pray thee, (saith he) of whom speaketh the Prophet this? of himselfe or of some other man? Act. 8. 34.* And upon this occasion,

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Philip explained him the text, preached unto him the Gospell of Christ, and converted him unto the faith, & brought him by baptisme into the bosome of the Church. And so it will bee with us. If when we heare the Text read, wee meete with some thing, which we understand not, yet even, that, if we do but cary away the words onely, will lie by us, till we meete with some more skilful then our selves, and of whom we may ask, as the Eunuch did of *Philip*, *I pray you, Sir, of whom is this spoken, or whereof is it meant, or how is it to be accorded with this or that Text which seem to say the contrary.* And by this practice

And if we use it accordingly, we shall every day gaine somewhat for our furtherance in grace. Wee shall either increase our knowledge, or amend our lives or prevent some objections; or one thing or other wee shall gaine by it, that may do us good towards salvation.

Use 1. This first of all confuteth the practice of the Roman Church; who, when they reade the Scriptures, do it in such a sort, as frustrateth the end that God aimed at in the reading of them; and depriveth the people of that profit, which they should reape by their hearing. For they reade it in unknownen tongue: and a
lan.

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Gen. 11.
7, 8.Deut. 31.
9, &c.

language not understood by the hearers, is not for edification; no, not of Babel it selfe. For I pray, how can it possibly be, that men should learn by that writing, whose words they understand not? when *Moses* commanded the Priests to reade the Law to the people, as in the place of *Deuter.* before mentioned he did; suppose he had spoken in this manner unto them, (which is the resultance of the Romish practice and doctrine,) Yee shall reade all this Law in a strange language, in Latin or Arabick, or some such other tongue unknowen to the Jews; that they may heare it, and by it learne to feare God, and keepe his commandements:

how

how ridiculous and foolish
would the speech have been?
Surely, *S. Paul* did think, that
if an unbeliever should come
into a Christian Church,
and heare the Doctors spea-
king in a tongue unknown
to the people, hee would
think them no better then
madd men. *1 Cor. 14. 23.*
Nor would any of us think
him to be well in his witts,
that should reade unto a
plaine Englishman, a Latin,
Greek or Hebrew book, and
in a serious sort bid him to
hearken and attend what
that booke did speake for
his instruction and comfort.
Yea, and they of the Church
of Rome themselves, when
they reade to the people
such things, as they care for,
and

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and would have men to know and observe, then they speake to them in their mother tongue. Their *Festivall* and their *Legend*, they have beene accustomed to reade in the Church, in the knowen language of our countrey: Yea and at this time, though they administer the Sacrament of Baptisme in the Latin tongue, as all their other Service is; yet when they give order to bring back the *Chrisome*, to the Church, and to keepe the child from bodily harm, they breake off their sacred language and speake to the people in their own mother tongue. *Godfathers and Godmothers of this childe* * (say they) *wee charge you, that*

* *Manua.*
Sacerd.
de Baptif.
pag. 38.

ye charge the father and mother, to keepe it from fire and water; and other perills to the age of seven yeeres, &c. and that the mother bring againe the Chrisme at her purification. Now I would gladly heare from any learned Papist, why Latin should not as well teach them to bring againe the Chrisme, as it can teach them to serve God in the duties of pietie, or to help their neighbours by the duties of mutuall love and charitie. Or, if they think it behoovefull for the people to have these rules of theirs propounded to them in the English and knownen tongue; why they should not think it better and more availeable for them

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them, to deliver the rules of Gods word unto them in the like intelligible sort, then in a foreine language. Surely, if a peevish humour to maintaine all abuses of their Church were layed aside, the point would neede no long disputing.

Vse 2. This also confuteth the follie of Separatists and phantastick zelots among us, who vilifie and contemne the reading of Scriptures, in the Church, and by consequence the hearing of them read. The (b) Antors of the *Admonition* to the Parliament, who were the fathers of our English Schismatiks, say of reading of the Scriptures; *Reading is not feeding of Gods flock: but*

Admo-
nit. in B.
White-
gifts
booke
Pag. 579.

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it is as evill, as playing upon a stage, and worse too. Foure mouths, was the act of *Moses* no better then playing upon a stage, when he read all the words of the Law, to the people? *Exod.* 24. 7. and was *Joshua* as bad as a stage-player, when he did the like? *Iosb.* 8. 34. And was *Barnab* as bad or worse then a stage-player, when hee read the words of *Jeremie* out of a written roll, by Gods owne appointment? *Ier.* 36. 2, 3. &c. Nay, but such was the spirit of these vipers, that they had rather crosse Gods known ordinance then not oppose the orders of the Church, in whose womb they were bred. And of some such like temper are
some

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c M. Jo.
Downe
in a Treatise
of the Efficacie
of
Reading.

some others of later times.
(c) A learned Preacher in a booke now lately published, telleth of some in the West country, where himselfe dwelt, that their *maner was, neglecting the publik service and reading, to send their servants or children, to know when the Preacher was ready to go into the pulpit. For till then they list not to come. And so (saith hee) according to the French jest, they turne all Gods worship into a meere preachment. And some have I knowen, who following a preacher of their owne, to a strange place, have staid without the walls of the Church till the Sermon did begin. And would God, none of our better minded people*

people were tainted with a taint of this leaven. But when there are some, and they not a few, who never appeare in the Church, save when the Bell giveth warning to a Sermon; would not a man think, that they nothing esteeme either the Liturgie of our Church, or the hearing of Gods word read in the publik assemblie? I say no more of such but only pray God to give them a better minde. And for the rest, who have learned better, I beseech them by the mercies of God, that they will not countenance these fantastik mens error, by their negligent & needlesse absence from the Church, when on holy daies and weeke

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weeke daies, the Scriptures are read to the people, and the prayers and praises of the Church are with joint consent presented unto God. And so I leave to refute them, and come in the next place to exhort our selves. And the summe of my Exhortation is, that

Vse 3. Seeing the hearing of Gods word read is so usefull to a godly and an happy life, therefore, as wee love our soules, we would not neglect the opportunitie of such a blessing, when it is offered. It was Gods commandement to his people, that at such times as men came together in greatest multitudes, then all of them should be called to the hearing

ring of his word read. And the learned say, that when the time of reading was come, a Trumpet was sounded through the City, that all might have warning, and might bee present to heare what God did say unto them, for the good of their soules. By which things wee may see, what great care God and his Church had, that this dutie might be performed. And the like care they have of us at this day. For God hath sent his word home unto us into our owne Parishes, and to many of us even hard at our doores: so that wee neede not to make long journeys, as the people of the Jews did, who came out of all the parts of the Land

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Land to Jerusalem to worship. And our Church hath assigned us the times of hearing, and the Bells give us warning when the time is come. And nothing is wanting, that can bee desired in this kinde, if we be not wanting to our selves. And if after all this, wee shall neglect to heare God, when he speaketh unto us for our instruction; what can we expect, but that he should refuse to heare us, when we speake to him for help and assistance? Surely, he threatned to deale so with his people of old, *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: I will also laugh at your calamitie, and mock when your feare cometh.*

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cometh.—And, Then shall they call upon mee, but I will not answere; they shall seeke mee earcly, but they shall not finde mee. Prov. 1.24, 26, 28. He meaneth, that because they refused to heare him, when he taught them their duty out of his word; therefore hee would refuse to heare them, when they made their prayers, for his help in their neede. And so, if we turn the deafe eare to God, when he speaketh unto us in his word; it will be just with God to turne a deafe eare to us, when wee speake to him in our prayers. Nay the Apostle goeth further, and aggravateth our sinne above the sinne of the Jews, by the circumstance

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stance of the time and persons. *If the word spoken by Angels (saith he) was stedfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: how shall wee escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.* Hebr. 2.2,3. Where we have 2. things worth our noting; (1.) that the contempt of the Gospel spoken by Christ and his Apostles is a greater sinne, then the contempt of the Law delivered by Moses and the Prophets. And (2.) that every contempt of Gods word (whether a contempt of obeying it; or which is more, a contempt

tempt of hearing of it) is a neglecting of our owne salvation ; because the hearing of the word , and the obtaining of salvation are by Gods ordinance lincked together. By the hearing of this word read , *Iosias* and *Antonie* and *Augustin* were converted to God , and furthered toward salvation : & what knoweth any of us, but if we come to Church, when we are invited thither, we may heare that chapter, or that part of the Gospell read , which may turne us from some sinne , or direct us to some necessary duty, and in conclusion help to save our soules ?

Ob. But some perhaps will say, Nay, but I can reade the

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Bible at home ; and what neede I then to come to Church , to heare it read there ?

This Objection involveth in it two questions , both which are worthy of our consideration : 1. Whether reading of Gods word may be a sufficient excuse to free us from hearing it read. 2. Whether reading or hearing it read in privat may excuse us from hearing it read in the publick assembly. Of these severally.

And first for the former question , that I may speake more clearely and distinctly, I will part mine answer into three assertions or propositions.

1. *Prop.* There is good use

use of both the one and the other. For hearing the word read, I have delivered my reasons already: and the very same reasons may serve to prove the use of our reading it also. For first it hath the testimony of Scriptures. The King is commanded to *reade the booke of the Law*, that thereby he may learn to do his duty. *Deut. 17. 18, 19.* And when one asked of our Lord, what he should do to be saved, our Lord answered him by asking an other question, *What is written in the Law? how readeest thou?* *Luk. 10. 25, 26.* implying that by reading the Scriptures, he might have learned an answer to his question, and thereby have beene di-

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rected how to be saved. And *Matt. 12. 3. Have ye not read (saith our Saviour) what David did? &c.* And that implyeth, that by reading that passage of Scripture they might have been better informed, then to have condemned the guiltlesse. Thus, Reading of Scriptures by our selves is confirmed by Testimonies of Scripture, as well as the hearing of it read by the Minister.

2. Secondly, it may be proved by examples of holy men, who have used this practice to their great profit, for example, *Daniel* by reading the Prophecie of *Jeremie* understood Gods will for delivering Israel out of their captivity. *Dan. 9. 2.*
The

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The Eunuch by reading of *Isay* the Prophet, was brought in the end to the knowledge of the Messias and Saviour of the world.

Act. 8. 32. And *S. Augustin* by reading *Rom. 13. 13.* was converted from a vitious to a godly life: And so, if we reade Gods word with attention and care, wee may understand Gods will for our Redemption from Satan and sinne, and we may learn that which may direct us to Christ the Saviour of the world, and may meete with some motives that may worke in us remorse and repentance. These uses of reading Gods word may be learned by the examples produced.

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3. Rea-

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3. Reading of Scriptures hath the like benefits and helps of grace, as were observed to arise from hearing of them read. For (1.) reading as well as hearing may acquaint us with the history of the Church, and the providence that God hath used in the governing and ordering of it. (2.) It may instruct us in the duties of our callings and places, for therefore the King was commanded to reade the Law, that hee might learne to feare the Lord his God, and keepe all the words of the Law, &c. *Dent. 17. 19, 20.* (3.) It will acquaint us with the words and phrases and sentences of Gods word: and these being layed up in
our

our memories, will prepare us for a profitable hearing of Sermons. And (4.) it will occasion us, and enable us, when wee doubt of any thing, to desire direction from the learned, and by their directions to learne, what we could not understand by our selves. These helps of reading I onely name and do but point at them; because the former proofes used in the point of hearing are as applicable to this of reading. For these two, reading the word by our selves, and hearing it read by others, do alike represent to our minds the meaning of the holy Ghost in Scriptures: the difference in this respect only is, that

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the one doth it by the eye, and the other by the eare, which in respect of the maine end, the instruction and salvation of our soules, is all one. I conclude then that there is a like good use, both of reading the word, & of hearing it read : which is my first assertion.

2. *Prop.* When we reade the Scriptures by our selves, we have this benefit by it, that if wee meete with a matter of difficulty or of speciall moment, we may *pause* upon it, and reade it over againe, and consider of it in silence. And by this meanes, we may in the end understand, what at the first we understood not, & may also imprint in our memories, that
which

which after once hearing or reading, would have slipped away from us. And herein reading by our selves is better then hearing things read by others. For when an other readeth unto us, our mindes and memories are tied to go along with his tongue: nor can wee command any time of pausing and considering, when the occasion doth require it.

3. *Prop.* When we heare the Scriptures read by Gods Minister, who hath beene brought up in the rules of Grammar and Rhetorik; we shall gaine this benefit by hearing him, that the sentences being distinguished, by their rests & pauses,

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and the words being pronounced with the right accents and tone, and every clause so modulated by the voice, as is agreeable to the matter expressed by them; the speech so uttered will delight the senses, and carry along the affections, and perswade the understanding, and sway the whole man, much more then the same sentences could do, if they were onely looked upon with the eye, or read without the right accent & modulation of the voice.

Aeschines, when hee pronounced an Oration of *Demosthenes*, and perceived that the people were much affected with it; Yea, said he but, [*quid si ipsam bestiam audiis-*

Quintil.

lib. 11.

cap. 3.

pag. 666.

Plin. l. 2.

epist. 3.

Valer.

Maxim.

l. 8. c. 10.

*audissetis,] What if yee heard Demosthenes himselfe ? meaning, that if hee had pronounced his owne Oration, it would have affected them much more. And so, if any shall reade the Scriptures either in silence without any voice, or with that carriage of the voice, as is not agreeable to art and reason, (and so ignorant people, many times do reade them;) the word of God would lose a great part of that life and vigour which otherwise is contained in it, and by right modulation of the voice would appeare to the hearer. For example, when the Apostle saith *what ? have yee not houses to eate and to drink in ?* if a man (as those that be*

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be illiterate some times do) should read the word [what] without a note of interrogation, hee should much weaken the power of that sentence. And so when the Prophet saith, *The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon Him, and the wickednesse of the wicked shall bee upon Him*: if any should reade the words without putting the accent upon the word *Him*, he would lose the grace that belongeth to the Prophets words. And in this respect hearing of the word read by the Minister, who knoweth the rules of pronounciation and deliverie, is better, then the reading of it by our selves, who either speake
not

not to the eare, or keep not the right accent, or put not that vigour and life in the words, which is agreeable to the matter. The summe of all is, Reading the word, and hearing it read, ech of them hath a peculiar vertue of his owne, which the other hath not, yet both of them, for the substance of the duty, are alike profitable and usefull for a Christian. And therefore it is best, when both are joyned together, and used in their fitt places and times. And this may suffice for answer to the first question.

2. *Quest.* The second is, Whether reading in privat, may excuse us from hearing it read in publik. To this
my

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my answere is, No. And my reasons be these.

1. It may be a question, whether they who alledge their privat reading to excuse them from publik hearing, do alwayes spend the houres of hearing in the Church, in their reading at home. Surely, the best of us are negligent inough in holy duties, and doe quickly forget the times of devotion, and our purposes of well doing; unlesse we have some monitor, that may put us in mind. Now for the services of the Church, the sett houre of the day and the sound of the bell accompanying it, doe summon us to work. But what summons ech one hath at home, to call

call him into his cloſet, and warne him to his taſk of reading, I know not, I leave every mans conſcience to be his owne Judge. Onely I will ſay thus much, that if men can diſpenſe with themſelves for publik hearing, when the time is appointed by the authority of the Church; it is no breach of charity, to think that they will diſpenſe with themſelves for their privat reading, the time thereof being limited, onely by their own diſcretion.

2. Say, that men and women be ſo exact and diligent, that they doe conſecrate the times of publik ſervice unto privat devotions, and reade at home as
much

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much the more for their absence from the Church, as they could heare, if they were present there: Yet I dare say, they will not, nor cannot make such choise of profitable chapters and usefull lessons, in their privat devotions, as the Church hath done for them in her publik Service. For here we have chapters and Gospels and Epistles fitted to the season and the present occasion. For example, when we celebrat the Feast of Christs Birth, those Scriptures are read unto us which relate the maner of this mystery, and the occurrences that then happened. And these two, the time and the Scriptures being fitted ech
to

to other, do helpe to support one an other. The Scriptures teach us how to celebrate the time to Gods glory and our owne good: and the time stirreth us up, to attend & apply and make use of the Scriptures read. And the like may be said of our Lords Conception, and of the presenting of him in the Temple, and of his Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension into heayen. And so it is also on the festivall dayes of the Apostles and Evangelists & other Saints. On their memoriall dayes those Scriptures are read which tell us, what gifts God bestowed upon them, and what services they performed to him, and what good

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good the Church hath received by their meanes. And hence we may learne to honour God in his Saints, and to take example from their vertues for our imitation, and to celebrate their festivities with heavenly meditations agreeable to the time. And by such helps as these are, wee may gaine knowledge in the articles of our faith, and direction in the duties of a good life.

3. Let it bee supposed (which yet I can not believe to bee true;) that a man or woman constantly spendeth in his privat reading, the whole time that is appointed for publik hearing; and that he and she can
make

make as good choise of Scriptures for their reading, as the Church hath done for their hearing: Yet, (all this notwithstanding) their privat exercise will come short of the publik, because in the Church men may joyne both reading and hearing together. When they heare the Ministers voice, they may look upon the Text in their booke; and so at once, they shall have the use both of eare and of eye: the one of which will stirre up the affection, and the other will confirme the memorie; and at every pause may reflect back upon that sentence, that importeth them most. And consequently at one time,

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time, and in the same exercise, they shall in good part reape the benefits both of reading and of hearing.

4. Lastly, suppose a man reapeth as much good by his privat reading, as in reason such an exercise well ordered, can produce: Yet he cannot promise to his privat devotions the like blessing, that God hath promised to the publik services of his Church. For of the Tabernacle hee hath said, *There will I meete with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercie seate. Exod. 25. 22.* And of the Temple he hath said, *I have chosen this place to my selfe for an house of sacrifice. 2 Chro. 7. 12. and vers. 15, 16.*

16. *Mine eyes shall bee open, and mine eares attent to the prayer, that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there forever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually. And so, of the Assemblies of Christian people CHRIST hath promised, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matt. 18. 20.* By all which we may learne, that when we pray & heare in publik, God hath promised a blessing, not onely to the exercises themselves, but to the place also, where they are performed; even because it is *Gods house*. But if wee performe the same duties

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duties at home, though he hath promised a blessing to the services, if they be performed in due sort, yet hee hath promised no blessing to the place, because it is any mans dwelling, or his *privat closet*. And now according to this rule and observation, a man may expect a further blessing upon his reading and hearing in the Church, then he can expect upon the like performances in his owne house.

All these things, concerning the two questions, layed together, the summe is this : Reading of Gods word, and hearing of it read, are both of them good exercises, which God hath coupled together, and man must

must not put them a sunder. Againe, the performance of these duties at home and in privat, is good in its season, and may be a help that the *word of Christ may dwell richly in us* : but it must not in any case justle out the publike service of the Temple, where God more especially doth dwell. And therefore, as our Lord said of the duties of *mercie and justice* compared with the duties of *tithing anise and mint and cumine* ; *these things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Matt. 23.* so may I say of publik and privat both reading and hearing ; *These wee should do, and not leave the other undone.*

My

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My conclusion shall bee an Exhortation, consisting of two parts.

I. That as occasion and opportunitie will serve, wee be carefull to read the Scriptures in our privat houses. When I say, as occasion and opportunitie will serve, I meane, that I do not desire, much lesse require, that servants should steale from their masters the houres that be due to their service, or that masters themselves should neglect the businesses of their calling, in which God hath set them: but I meane, that both master and servant, and all other Christians should redeeme the time, as the Apostle speaketh, that is, should
take

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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take the occasion, and make their best advantage of it, while the time serveth. And he or she who besides the time allotted for such exercises on Sundayes and holy dayes shall take those shreds of time on the other dayes, which each mans businesse will permit him without either wronging of others, or neglecting of his own estate; I doubt not but within a few yeares, he may be well read in the booke of God. It is reported of *Alphonſus* King of Arragen, that notwithstanding his great affaires of government, and the daily businesses of a Kingdome; yet he gained so much time for this use, as that he read over the Bible fourteen times,

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Serar. in
Joth. l. 3.
pag. 289.
&c.

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with Glosses & Commentaries
upon the Text. And by this
wee may gather , that no
mans place, who is his owne
master, is so full of businesse,
but if he will husband his
time well, & not drown him-
selfe in worldly cares , or la-
vish away his time in eating
and drinking and sporting,
he may gaine sufficient time
for reading , without ne-
glecting of the works of his
place and calling. Yea , and
servants and labouring men,
who have the fewest houres
to spare , yet if they be pro-
vident for their soules , may
now and then finde some
leisurable times for this ex-
ercise without either wron-
ging of others, whose work
they do , or defrauding of
them-

themselves of needfull times
of refreshing.

2. My exhortation also is,
that wee do not suffer our
selves to bee kept at home
without urgent cause, when
God by the ordinance of his
Church doth call us into his
house. There are not a few
in the world, who partly
through idlenesse, and part-
ly through fanfifulnesse and
contempt of government,
despise the good orders of
our Church, and neglect
the publik service to the of-
fence of God, and wronging
of their owne Soules. But
they who are sober minded,
though they live in the
midst of such a froward ge-
neration, yet will consider
(and I beseech them so to

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do with heedfulness & care;) that God hath promised to meete with his people in the Tabernacle, and that his eyes will be open, & his eares attent to the prayer that is made in the Temple, and that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will bee in the midst of them. And they may further be remembred, that David, when he heard that his child was dead, went into the house of the Lord and worshipped. 2 Sam. 12. 20. And not onely the Pharisee, who delighted to shew his devotion in publik places, but the humble-minded Publican too, went up into the Temple to pray. Luk. 18. 10. And Peter & Iohn the blessed Apostles of our Saviour, after

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after they had beene filled with the holy Ghost, *went up together into the Temple at the houre of prayer, being the ninth houre. Act. 3. 1.* Now there were none of these men, but might have found an house, or a closet, or a chamber to performe their devotions in : but they knew, nor did any man in those dayes make question of it, but that the *house of God* was the fittest place to serve God in, and that the houre appointed for publik prayer, was the best season for them to present their prayers to God. They had not learned that subtile distinction, which some phantastiks use now a dayes, that a *privat prayer must not bee*

M 3.

made

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made in a publik place. For then the Publican, whose prayer was well accepted with God, would not in so publik a place as the Temple in Jerusalem, have made so privat a prayer, as this, *God be mercifull unto me a sinner.* Nor did they then beleeeve, that there was any superstition in observing the *Canonicall houres* of the Church: for then *Peter* and *Iohn* would not have chosen the *ninth houre*, which was one of the Churches houres in those dayes, for their time of resorting to the Temple. Those that are wise & sober minded will consider these things; and will not doubt, but that praying and hearing and every exercise of
devoti-

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devotion will the sooner receive a blessing, if it bee performed in the place of Gods presence.

C A P. VII.

*Hearing of Gods word preached
is a meanes of blessednesse.*

Hitherto I have spoken of hearing the word read: it followeth now to speake of hearing the word preached, and to shew how that also may conduce to blessednes or an happy life.

For clearing of which point three things are to be declared; 1. what we are to understand by this word [preaching.] 2. how it may be proved by Scriptures,

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Cap. 7.

that the hearing of the word preached is available to a blessed life. And thirdly what special helps towards happinesse we may reape by hearing the word preached, over and beside the profite that we have by hearing it read.

I. *Quest.* What we meane by [Preaching.] For answere hereto these short notes may suffice.

I. *Note.* The word [preach] in English, as also the Greek [*κηρύσσω*] whereto it answereth, is sometimes taken in a common and generall acception, for any kinde of publishing or proclaiming, by what meanes soever it be done. Thus in the 12. of *S. Luke*, our Lord
dis

disswading men from hypocrisie and double dealing, useth this reason *vers.* 3. because how cunningly and secretly soever men carie their contrivances for the present, yet there will a time come, when all their juggling and double dealing shall be disclosed and layed open in the cleare Sun. The words of the Text in the originall are these, ὃ ὡς ἐν τῷ ὕμνῳ ἐλάλησατε — Κηρυχθήσεται ὅτι ἦν ὑμῶν. The Geneva Translators turne it thus in English, *That which yee have spoken in the eare, in secret places, shall be preached on the houses*: Our late authorized Translation hath it thus, *That which ye have spoken in the eare in closets, shall bee*

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proclaimed on the house tops.
Nor are either of these translations any whit amisse, or any thing different in the substance. Only, that which saith, *shall be preached on the houses*, cometh nearer to the word; and the other, which saith, *shall be proclaimed*, doth more plainly expresse the meaning, and both layed together, do teach us thus much, that to [Preach] sometimes is nothing else, but to proclaime or publish a thing, that all may heare and take notice of it. And in this sense reading of the Scriptures, whereof I spoke before, may be called preaching, without any incongruity or error. Yea, and so it is called *Act. 15. 21. Moses*
(saith

(saith the Text) *hath in every citie them that preach him, being read in their Synagogues every Sabbath day.* Note here (1.) what is said to be done, and that is, *Moses* is preached in every citie. (2.) how this is said to be done, & that is by *reading* of his Law. *Moses hath them that preach him, being read,* or seeing he is read in their Synagogues. Thus it appeareth that preaching is sometime used in such a generall signification, as that reading may be called preaching. But this is not that preaching, which I meane in this place. When I say, that hearing of the word preached is a meanes of blessednesse, I understand the word in a more strict or restrained

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restrained sense, as preaching is distinguished from reading, and as we commonly use the word in our ordinarie speech; and that is, when Gods Minister doth by an audible voice teach the doctrine of salvation in such maner as himselfe hath contrived and ordered it for the instruction of the people.

2. *Note.* This kinde of preaching in the stricter and more proper sense, is of two sorts. For sometimes men preach, being directed by *inspiration* or immediat revelation from God. Thus *Moses* and the Prophets did preach in the old Testamēt; and Christ and his Apostles in the New. Saint *Peter* saith
of

of the Prophets, that they
spake, as they were moved by
the holy Ghost 2 Pet. I. 21. And
our Saviour saith of his dis-
ciples, *It is not ye that speake,*
but the spirit of your father,
which speaketh in you. Matt.
10. 20. Sometimes againe
men preach Gods word, as
they are enabled by the *rules*
of art, and their owne in-
dustrie and studie. Thus
the Priests and Levits did
preach, when after the rea-
ding of the book of the Law,
they *gave the sense, and caused*
the people to understand the
reading. Nehem. 8. 8. And
thus the Scribes and Pha-
rises did preach, when
sitting in Moses his chaire,
they taught men to keepe
and observe the things writ-
ten

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ten in the Law. *Matt.* 23. 2, 3. And this is the preaching, which the Doctors and Pastors of the Church, after the Apostles times have used, and which Gods Ministers do use at this day. Of both these kindes of preaching, my note is to be understood; that the hearing of Gods word preached, whether it bee performed by divine inspiration or by humane studie, is still a meanes to make men happy, that make the right use of it.

3. *Note.* These kindes of preaching, whether by inspiration or studie, may be performed two wayes. For sometimes the preacher taketh a Text of Scripture for
the

the ground of his Sermon. He explaineth the words, and out of them, draweth instructions, and then applieth all to the use of his hearers. This course our Saviour tooke *Luk. 4.* He came to Nazareth, where he had beene brought up, and, as his custome was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to reade. And there was delivered unto him the booke of the Prophet Esaias: & when he had opened the booke, he found the place where it was written; The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath annointed mee, to preach the Gospell to the poore, hee hath sent me to heale the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and

Luk. 4.

16, 17,

18, 19,

20, 21.

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and recovering of sight to the blinde, to set at libertie them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable yeare of the Lord, &c. In which passage wee may observe two things. (1.) that our Lord chose a Text of Scripture to discourse upon: *When hee had opened the booke he found the place, where it was written, The spirit, &c. Isai 61. 1.* (2.) that hee unfolded and applied this Text to the present occasion. *This day, saith hee, is this Scripture fulfilled in your eares;* meaning that which the Prophet had foretold in those words, was now fulfilled in himselfe, who preached unto them, as was prophesied of him aforetime.

In

In the like maner *Philip* also preached *Act. 8. 32, &c.* The Eunuch had read the Text out of *Isai. 33. 7.* He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, &c. And then *Philip* opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him *Iesus*. In these places it appeareth that *Philip* and our Saviour tooke a Text to preach upon; the one such a Text, as the occasion then offered, and the other such as himselfe made choise of for the purpose. But at other times wee finde, that preachers have chosen a theame which they thought usefull for the time, and without any Text, to ground their discourse on, have unfolded that point
out

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out of Scriptures and reason,
 & applied it to the peoples
 use. Thus our Lord did
 preach, when he made that
 famous Sermon, called by
 the learned, [*Sermo Domini
 in monte,*] *Our Lords Sermon
 in the mount*, recorded by
 the Evangelist *Matt.* 5. 6,
 & 7. chapters. For in this
 Sermon wee have many ex-
 positions of Scriptures, ma-
 ny doctrines of religion,
 and many exhortations and
 directions for a godly life:
 but wee finde no Text first
 read, by direction of which
 he proceeded in his Sermon.
 Thus our Lord: and so Saint
Peter preached also, *Act.* 2,
 & 3. chapters; and Saint
Stephen, *Act.* 7. and *S. Paul*
Act. 13, & 17. And of later
 times,

times, some also in these parts of the Church have done the like; though the common use now among us, is alwayes to ground our Sermons upon some Text, even then when men scarce once touch upon the Text in the whole Sermon. Of both these sorts of preaching my note is true, that if Gods word bee preached aright, whether by grounding on a Text, or by propounding of a Theame; yet the hearing of the word thus preached, is a meanes to make him blessed, that useth it aright.

The summe of all is, that the hearing of the word preached, in which of these sorts soever it be, is available

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able to blessednesse, and alike profitable to salvation. And the reason is, because by every one of them we may bee instructed alike in the knowledge of God and his service, and may be edified in the faith of Christ, & in the obedience of his Lawes; which is the only way, that leadeth to happinesse and eternall life. Thus much for the first point, what wee meane by preaching, or the word preached.

II. Quest. The next is how it may appeare, that the hearing of the word thus preached, is a meanes of blessednes. And the answer is, it appeareth by these reasons.

1. Because it is the way
and

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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and the meanes, by which
Christ hath founded his
Church, converted the nati-
ons, and saved the soules of
beleevers. So *S. Paul* saith,
that *by the foolishnesse of prea-
ching*, (so the world este-
med it,) *it pleased God to save
them that beleeve.* 1 Cor. 1. 21.
And so it is said of the Jews,
that they did *forbid the Apo-
stles to preach to the Gentiles*,
that they might bee saved.
1 Thess. 2. 16. And to these
sayings the event proveth
answerable. For *Saint Peter*
by the preaching of one
Sermon converted three
thousand soules. *Act.* 2. 41.
and *S. Paul* converted many
Jews and proselyts. *Act.* 13.
43. and more particularly,
and by name he converted
Lydia

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Lydia and the Gaoler. *Act.* 16. and *Dionysius Areopagita*, and *Damaris* and others. *Act.* 17. And, in a word, by him & his fellow-labourers, all the Christian world have beene brought to the faith. Experience then sheweth it to be true, that the hearing of the word preached, is a meanes to bring men to the faith, and by faith to salvation.

2. It is proved also, because God doth send preachers into the world, that by their labours hee may bring men to heaven and happinesse. For this end it is, that God sent his own Sonneto preach the Gospell. *The Spirit of the Lord God*, (saith our Lord in the Prophet,) is
upon

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, &c. that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. Is. 61. 1, 2, 3. In these words wee have two things for our purpose; (1.) the work, that our Lord Christ was sent about: and that was, to preach good tidings, &c. (2.) the end, that was intended and effected by it; & that was two-fold; mans sanctification, and Gods glory: that they might be called the trees of righteousness, and that hee might be glorified by it. And for the like end and purpose, our Lord Christ himselfe did send his Apostles to preach, Matt.

10. 5,

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10. 5, 7 : and the seventie Disciples , *Luk. 10. 1.* and *S. Paul* , *1 Cor. 1. 17.* And to save labour in naming of particulars , the Apostle telleth us , that when our Lord was ascended up into heaven , *hee gave some to bee Apostles , and some Prophets , and some Evangelists , and some Pastors and Teachers.* But why and for what end all this? why, it was, (saith the Text,) *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the worke of the ministry, & for the edifying of the body of Christ : till we all come in the unitie of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Sonne of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ. Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13.* By this we see, that

that as the Apostles did bring men to the faith by their preaching of the Gospell in the beginning : so God hath established a settled course of teaching to the worlds end ; by which men may bee brought to happinesse and eternall life. And thus much for answer to the second question.

III. *Quest.* The last is, What help may we have by hearing the word preached, beside or more then wee might gaine by hearing the Scriptures read ? To this my answer is, it may further us in the way of godlinesse diverse wayes, over and beside the benefit that is reaped by the word read. For,

I. It may further us for the

N

right

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right understanding of many passages of Scripture, more then we could gather by hearing of them read. For though the principles of faith and rules of a good life be delivered clearely & plainly in Scriptures, and a man by reading or hearing them read, may gaine much help toward salvation: yet it is true also that there are many speeches & phrases & words, which are not easily understood by an ordinary Christian; but may be explained & made cleare by a learned preacher. For example, the disciples understood not the right meaning of that sentence of the Prophet, *Behold, I will send you Eliab the Prophet, before the coming of the great*

great and dreadfull day of the Lord : and hee shall turne the heart of the fathers to the children, &c. Malac. 4. 5. For they conceited that this was meant of *Elias* in person, whereas it was meant of *Iohn the Baptist*, who came in the spirit and power of *Elias*; and because hee resembled him in his office is therefore called by his name. This when they understood not, our LORD expounded it unto them, and made them to know the true meaning of that Scripture, as appeareth *Mar. 9. 12*. Againe, the Eunuch of Ethiopia did not understand that saying of *Isai*, (cap. 53. v. 7.) He was led as a Sheepe to the slaughter, and like a Lambe dumb before his
N 2 shearer,

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shearer, so opened hee not his mouth, &c. *Act. 8. 32.* but when Philip came, and expounded the Text, and preached unto him JESUS out of that Text, then he understood the words and beleaved in CHRIST to salvation. And so among us, there is no ordinary Christian, but may stick at the meaning of som Scriptures, which, if a learned preacher have them in handling, hee may see unfolded and explained.

2. By hearing the word preached a man may learne how this or that Scripture doth prove and confirme a point of divinity, or doth confute a contrary errour, or doth commend unto us some profitable dutie belonging

longing to our calling; which a common Christian of and by himself would not have marked and observed. For example, the Sadduces and common people of that time, did not see, nor could not conceive how the Resurrection of the dead might be proved out of that saying of *Moses* (*Exod. 3. 6.*) *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* But our Saviour sheweth it by a plaine reason, that that Scripture proveth the truth of that point, because that *God is not the God of the dead but of the living.* Whence it foloweth, that because God saith, that *he is the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,* therefore

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Abraham & Isaac & Jacob are living still, and consequently their soules were not perished or vanished into nothing, as the Sadduces fondly imagined, and therefore said that there was no Resurrection. Againe, the people did not know, that that place of *David*, *Thou shalt not leave my soule in hell, nor suffer thine holy one to see corruption*, (*Psal. 16. 10.*) did include any prooffe of Christs Resurrection from the dead. But *S. Paul* sheweth and that from the Text it selfe, that this saying must needs bee meant of *Christ*, who upon the third day after his death, rose againe from the dead, without any tincture of corruption; because of *David* that

that Text could not bee meant, who had beene a long time dead, and now was consumed into ashes, but never rose againe from the place of corruption, as *Act.13.36. Act.2.29.* And so in like sort, there are many passages of holy writ, which yeeld plaine prooffe for confirming of some truth, or for confuting of some error, or for instructing us in some duty; which an unlearned man among us cannot understand by himselfe, but may learne it from a skilfull preacher.

3. By hearing the word preached we may learn how to applie the sayings of Scripture to our owne use, more then by hearing it read we

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could ever be able to do of our selves. For Scriptures teach us generall duties, and give us generall rules, without declaring how they agree to each age or place or person. For that were an infinit labour, and not to be performed at once. Now these rules and these sayings the unlearned do not know how to apply, so well as the preacher can teach and instruct them. Nor will the learned bee ready to make application to themselves, till some monitor remember them of their dutie. An example hereof wee have in our blessed Saviour, who having read that place of the Prophet, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, &c. Is. 61.1:*

pre-

presently applieth it in such a manner, as the hearers would never have thought of: *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your eares. Luk. 4. 21.* An other example to the same purpose we have in *S. Paul*, who having alledged that saying of the Prophet, *I have heard thee in an acceptable time, &c.* he presently teacheth the *Corinthians*, (which before they knew not;) how to apply it to the present time and occasion: *Behold now, (saith hee) is that accepted time; now is the day of salvation. 2 Cor. 6. 2.* To these we may add the example of *David*. He no doubt, had oftentimes read of the judgment of God against adul-

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tery and murder; nor could he be ignorant how necessary repentance was for preventing of that judgment: but hee neglected to apply these rules to himselfe, to whom they properly belonged; till *Nathan* came to him, and applied them to his conscience, and tould him in plaine words, *Thou art the man.* 2 Sam. 12. 7.

By all this wee may see, that there is great benefit in hearing the word preached, besides that which may bee gotten by the word read. And hereof there is plaine reason also.

1. Because the preacher is supposed to bee bred and brought up in learning, and thereby hath gained skill to under-

understand those things which belong to his profession. For even in ordinary trades, he that hath been an Apprentice for seven years, may bee supposed to have gained skill both to manage his trade, and to traine up others in the knowledge of the same art : which they will not be able to doe, who were never bred up in that profession. And so it is in this case. If a man have spent sundrie years, perhaps twise seven or upward, in the study of Divinity, (as many of our preachers have;) in all probability and likelihood, that man will be able to understand & teach points, much better then men whose breeding hath beene in an other kinde.

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kinde. But if any shall stepp into the Pulpit, before he have passed through the Schooles, and take upon him to teach Divinity before hee ever learned it; I speake not of such a one, nor do I think him fitt to teach men the mysteries of Religion. Such a man may perhaps please the rude multitude, who esteeme more of a glibb tongue, then a solid braine, & are swayed more with found of words then with weight of reasons: but will never either satisfie the judgment of the learned, or direct any mans conscience in the wayes of salvation. Understand mee then to speake of such a one, as hath beene bred in the study of
good

good arts, and is (as the
Apostle calleth him,)
διδασκαλος, apt to teach, and
then yee will confesse it to
bee true, that such a prea-
cher will bee able to teach
his hearers the meaning
of Gods word, better then
they of themselves could
learne and understand
it.

2. Because the preacher,
besides his former studies,
doth or should bestow his
time on the weeke dayes,
to provide for his labours
on the Lords day or other
festivals. Other men spend
the weeke on their worldly
businesse, the merchant on
his traffick, the husbandman
on his tillage, the handi-
crafts man on his workman-
ship,

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ship, the Lawyer on his Clients, the Physician on his patients; and reserve only the Lords day for learning of Religion. But the employment of the preacher, even on the week day, is to turne his bookes, examine his Text, and studie for matter of instruction that may do his people good; that when the Lords day is come, he may speake pertinently to the purpose, and profitably for the furthering of his peoples soules. And such a man will bee more able to expound Scriptures, to state a controversie, and to give rules of a godly life; then any other can do, who hath not studied the points aforehand, and turned over
his

his bookes for his better information. But if there bee any of us preachers, who studie the world on the week daies, and then preach on Gods day what commeth next to our lips: I speake not of such, nor dare I commend them for men that may direct Gods people in the way of godlinesse; no, nor them neither, who value their labours by the number of Sermons which they preach, rather then by the solid notes of instruction which they do deliver. Such men may please idle professors, who make their religion an eare-labour, as Papists make their prayers a lip-labour. But understand me of such preachers, as besides

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sides their former studies, do bestow the weeke dayes for provision on the Lords day; and no man will denie, but such are more able to teach godlinesse, then they who have spent all the week on profane or worldly occasions. There is great reason then, to thinke, that the learned preacher may teach us more of Gods truth, then possibly we could learne by our selves.

And out of all this, wee may observe the great mercy of God towards us, and his great love to our soules, who hath provided such varietie of meanes to bring us to happinesse and eternall glory. First, he hath given us opportunitie of
reading

reading his word at home in a knowen tongue : and then hee hath provided us meanes that wee may heare it read in the publik congregation ; and lastly, that both the publik and privat reading may bee made more profitable and usefull , hee sendeth his preachers to guide us in the right understanding and applying of his word ; as he sent *Philip* to the Eunuch , to instruct him in the faith. And if after all this , wee neglect so great salvation offered unto us ; how shall we escape the just judgment of God , who commanded the *unprofitable servant* to bee cast into outer darknesse , where is weeping and gnashing of teeth ? Surely

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ly for such a neglect God complaineth of the Jews, as of men that had despised both his mercies and their owne comforts. *I*, saith he, *have written unto them the great things of my Law; but they were counted as a strange thing. Hos. 8. 12.* Where (1.) when he saith, *I have written the great things of my Law*, he putteth them in minde, that his word is not a thing of small value or not worth the reckoning and esteeme. But as *Moses* said of his Law, *It is no vaine thing for you; because it is your life. Deuter. 32. 47*: So our God telleth his people, that his word was no vaine, or idle thing; but the things therein contained were *great things*,
matters

matters of life and eternall
happinesse. (2.) When hee
saith, *I have written* unto
them these great things, he
implieth that these weigh-
tie things are hard at hand,
lying by them in store, that
they may take up the Bible,
and read and learne those
rules and directions, that
may carie them into heaven.
(3.) When he addeth; *But*
they, [*these great things of*
my Law,] *were counted, as a*
strange thing, he upbraideth
the people with their great
negligence, or contempt
rather, that having such a
faire opportunity, they de-
spised so great salvation, as
if it were a matter that con-
cerned them not.

And so it will bee with

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us Christians ; if we neglect either to read Gods word by our selves in privat , or to heare it read in publik , now that we have it so fairely and legibly written for our uses , God may chide us for our contempt of his mercies , & that upon better grounds and with more reason , then hee did chide the Jews. For (1.) he wrote indeede *great things* for them , but they are farre greater things that he hath written for us. They had the books of the old Testamēt , wherein CHRIST and salvation were scantly and obscurely taught : but we besides those books have the writings of the Evangelists & Apostles , wherein CHRIST JESUS

is

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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is crucified before our eyes, & wee are brought into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies, that wee may see God, as it were with open face. In respect of which cleare light it is, that *Kings and Prophets have desired to see those things, which wee see, and have not seene them*: Nay the very *Angels* in heaven did desire to looke into those things, which are made known by the preaching of the Gospel. Besides, these greater things of the Gospel are conveyed to us in a more easie and lesse costly way, then to our fathers of olde. They had Gods word penned by the hand of a Scrivener, which required much paines in the writer, and great

1. Pet.
1. 12.

Cap. 7.

great cost in the Buyer, and some skill in the reader of it. But since God hath sent printing into the world, we may purchase the whole Bible at a lesse price, then our fathers could have obtained *S. Matthews Gospell* alone, and every boy & girle may reade with readinesse and speede that which the learned might stumble or stopp at. The summe is, God offereth us a greater treasure at an easier rate; and, if now wee despise or set light by such a mercie, God may complaine of us, with more reason then hee did of the Jews; *I have written to them the great things of my Law; but they are counted with them as a strange thing.*

Againe,

Againe, God upbraideth the Jews, for an other contempt of the like mercie. *The Lord* (saith *Jeremie*) *sent unto you his servants the Prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your eare to heare. Ier. 25. 4.* Hee meaneth, that besides the Law written, hee sent the Prophets to preach and explaine and applie that Law unto them; but they contemned all, as things of no value. And is it not so with us too? God hath sent preachers in abundance; and what use wee have made of their labours, let him judge, that knoweth what our dealings be. I onely will say, how shall wee escape
Gods

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Gods anger, if we neglect
so great salvation?

It importeth us then to
make use of these mercies,
which being used aright
may help to make us blessed,
and being neglected may
breede no small danger. For
our better direction where-
in, besides what hath beene
said already, wee may take
these further observations
or rules.

If God give us the oppor-
tunitie of these helps to-
gether, as to most of us he
hath; we must not separate
in our practice those things,
which God hath joyned to-
gether in his precept. It is
our dutie to reade the Scrip-
tures at home, and it is no
lesse our duty to heare them
read

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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read in the Church ; and a duty also it is , to heare the word preached. All of them have their use , all of them are commended to us in the Scriptures, & all of them are availeable for salvation: and consequently all of them are to be made use of by us in the fitt season. If any man shall sett Gods ordinances together by the eares , and is either so addicted to privat reading , that hee despiseth publik hearing, or so honoreth the word preached, that hee neglecteth the word read ; I may say to him , and all such as hee is, as (a) S. James said in a like case , *Ye are partiall in your selves, and are become Iudges of evill thoughts. For he that*
O said,

(a) Iam.
2. 4. 11.

Cap. 7. *said*, Heare the word preached, said also, Heare the word read, yea, and reade it in your privat dwellings: and therefore, if ye heare it preached, & will not heare it read, ye are become *transgressors of the Law*. The conclusion is, They that will be blessed, may not make a divorce betweene those ordinances, which God hath made joint helps to a blessed life.

2. If necessitie do at any time force us to forbear some of these helps; wisdom must teach us to make the more diligent use of the rest. For example, if sickness, or some unavoidable necessitie do keepe us from hearing in the Church, wee must

must bee the more diligent in reading at home. And if want of education in our younger dayes hath left us unable to reade Scriptures by our selves, wee must be the more carefull to heare them read by others. And if attendance on children or other necessary occasions cause us to keepe our servants at home, when others are busied in the service of the Church, we should do our endeavour to supplie the losse of publik instructions by our privat admonitions, and by rehearsing to them at home those good directions which our selves did receive in the publik ministerie. And he or she, that is carefull thus to make up

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their wants and defects; though sometimes they be hindered by occasion, yet will gaine good opportunities, which will guide both themselves and their people to true blessednesse and eternall glory.

CAP.

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is a meanes of blessednesse.

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C A P. VIII.

*The keeping of Gods word is
an other meanes to make a
man blessed.*

Hitherto I have spoken
of hearing of Gods
word, the former meanes
commended by our Saviour
for attaining happinesse and
eternall life: Now follow-
eth the second, which is the
keeping of the word heard.
For clearing of which point
two things are necessarie to
be knowen; 1. How farre
wee may and must keepe
Gods word that we may be
blessed. 2. How this keeping
of Gods word is availeable

O 3 for

Cap. 8.

for blessednesse and eternall life.

Q. I.

[I.] How farre wee may and must keepe Gods word. For unfolding of this doubt, three questions are to bee solved. (1.) What it is to keepe Gods word, (2.) how farre in this life a man is able to keep it; and (3.) Whence we have abilitie to keepe it in such sort.

I. *Quest.* What it is to keepe Gods word.

Ans. This word [*to keepe*] when it is applied to speeches or doctrines, as in this place it is, hath two uses in Scripture. For it signifieth either to keep in minde and memorie, or to keep in our life and practice.

In *minde and memorie* we
keepe

kepe it, when with care we
committ and laie it up in
memorie, & do often think
on it, and revolve it in our
mindes. Thus the blessed
Virgin kept what shee had
heard concerning her Sonne
and our Saviour. For so it is
said, that the Shepheards of
Bethleem, upon the vision
that they had seene, and the
words that the Angels had
spoken unto them concern-
ing the birth of CHRIST,
*Came to Bethleem with haste,
and found Mary and Ioseph
& the Babe lying in a manger.
And when they had seene it,
they made known abroad the
saying that was told them
concerning this childe. Then
the Text addeth, But Mary
kept all these things and pon-*
O 4 *dered*

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dered them in her heart. Luk. 2. 16, 17, 19. And in the same chapter ver. 51. When shee had found her Sonne J E S U S being then but twelve years of age, sitting in the Temple, and reasoning and disputing with the Doctors; and alledging for his so doing, that he must be about his fathers businesse: his Mother, saith the Text, kept all these sayings in her heart. The meaning is, shee layed them up in her memorie, and often thought on them in her minde.

Secondly, we keep Gods word in life and *practice*, when we do that which God in his word requireth to be done by us. Thus the word is used, 1 Kings 11. 10. where
it

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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it is said of Solomon, that hee
* kept not that, which the
Lord commanded him. And
in this sense is the word fre-
quently taken in the Scrip-
tures: as Ezek. 20. 19. *Walk
in my statutes, and keepe my
judgements, and do them.* And
so Genes. 18. 19. *Abraham will
command his children; and
they shall keepe the way of the
Lord, to do justice and judg-
ment.* And Exod. 15. 26. *If
thou wilt hearken unto the
voice of the Lord thy God—
And wilt keep all his statutes;
I wilt put none of these diseases
upon thee, &c.* And in the
new Testament, *All these
[commandements] have I
kept from my youth up, saith
the yong man. Matt. 19. 20.*
And, yee have received the

Cap. 8.

* לֹא

שָׁמַר

שָׁמַר עֲשֵׂה

לֹא עֲשֵׂה

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Law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it, saith S. Stephen to the Jews. Act. 7. 53. And so in many other places both in the old and new Testament : so that I may safely say, that this is the common and usuall acception of this word.

Now of these two uses of the word, Doctor Rivet maketh choise of the former, as fitt for this place. When our Saviour saith, Blessed are they that heare the word of God and keepe it ; φυλάσσετε αὐτὸν : he thinketh that heere is meant a keeping in memory, or a care*

* Rivet in
Exo. 20. 8
pag. 157.

שמור

Deur. 5.
32. est à

שמר

quod est,
servare si-
ve cōser-
vare, etiā
tenere,
retinere,

quod sit memoriā : indicatque hoc verbum curam, sollicitudinem & diligentiam, ne emittatur vel effluat aut excutiat, quod observandum est. Hoc sensu verbo custodiendi vel servandi usus est Dominus, Beati qui verbum Dei audiunt, & custodiunt illud, φυλάσσετε αὐτὸν.
Luc. 11. 28.

and sollicitude, that the word which wee have heard, do not slipp from us and be forgotten. But to my thinking the Angell in the Revelation construeth it in the later sense or signification, when uttering for substance the very same sentence, that our Saviour used in this place, he expresseth it in these words; *Blessed are they that do his commandements, that they may have right to the tree of life, &c.* And surely the common use of the word in this sense, and the intention of our Saviours speech being compared with other like speeches in Scripture, and the generall streame of Interpreters, who run this way, may perswade any man,
and

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and do give mee sufficient warrant to understand this word in the later sense; and to say, that to *keep Gods word* in this place is as much as to *do it, and obey it*. Notwithstanding, I will grant thus much to D. *Rivet*, that the sense which he putteth upon the word, may be included or implied in this place, if wee construe the words to this purpose, *They are blessed, who so keepe Gods word in their memories, that they may keepe it in their life, and practice*. But then the keeping of it in memorie is but onely intimated; and the keeping of it in practice is principally and mainly intended in the Text. In a word then, to *keep Gods word*,
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is to do and performe what it commandeth or requireth to be done. And so much be said to the first question.

2. *Quest.* The second is, But can any man in this life be able thus to keepe or do Gods word ? And it seemeth, no. For *S. Iames* telleth us, that *whosoever shall keepe the whole Law, and yet offendeth in one point; hee is guiltie of all. Iam. 2. 10:* and not long after he telleth us further, *In many things we offend all. Iam. 3. 2.* It followeth, Therefore there is no man, but is guilty of the breach of the whole Law: and consequently, no man can keep it. *Ans.* For answer to this question and objection, we must note, that there is a twofold keeping

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keeping of Gods word or commandments; the one a Legall, & the other an Evangelicall keeping of them.

I. First, there is a *Legall* keeping: and that is, when wee keep and performe the commandements so exactly, as is answerable to the rigour of the Law, and as the rule of Justice doth require. And this exactnesse consisteth in three things. (1.) That our obedience be *universall* in respect of the object; or that every thing commanded by God, bee performed by us, without failing in any one point. For, if the Law be considered in it selfe, and without mercie from CHRIST to mitigate the rigour of it; it then de-

noun-

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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nounceth a curse against every offence without any exception. *Moses* saith, * *Cursed is he that confirmeth not the words of this Law, to do them.* Dent. 27. 26. And *S. Paul* alledging this sentence, rendreth the sense of it thus, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the booke of the Law, to do them.* Gal. 3. 10. Where, by saying, *All things, which are written,*—hee teacheth us, that the Law in that sentence meant the curse against any one onely sin committed against that Law. And accordingly we see, it was but one sin alone, that cast the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise

* So the Original hath it: & so the vulgar Latin, *Iunius, Vatablus*, &c. do render it: though our English Translation, I know not upon what mistake, doth add the word (all) that confirmeth not all the words of this Law, which is agreeable to the meaning, but not to the words.

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radise. (2.) The exact rule of the Law doth require that our obedience bee *continuell* in respect of the time; or, that wee performe not onely all the things, that are commanded, but at all times, while the Law is in force and doth require them to be done. For he that sinneth once only in all his life, confirmeth not all things, because then he disanulleth or disobeyeth something in the Law, whensoever he performeth not what the Law doth command. And therefore the Apostle alledging that former sentence of *Deuteronomie*, *Cursed is hee that confirmeth not the words*, rendreth it thus, *Cursed is hee that continueth not in all things,*

things ; implying hereby,
that the meaning of the
Law is , that he is accursed,
who at any time transgres-
seth the Law , though it bee
but once in all his life. And
this againe is verified in the
example of *Adam* and the
Angels. For the sin that cast
the Angels out of Heaven,
and *Adam* out of Paradise,
was but once committed
by them in all their life.
(3.) The Law, in the rigour
thereof doth require , that
our obedience bee *full* and
complete in respect of the de-
grees and measure of obe-
dience : or that it bee with
all the heart , and with all
the soule , and the utmost
intension and affection of
the heart , that God ought
to

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to bee obeyed withall, by men in this mortall life. For if a man come short in any degree that is required in our obedience, therein hee hath broken that part of the Law, which requireth all: and consequently, by Saint *James* his rule, he is a transgressor of the Law, & standeth guiltie of the breach of it: Now, put all these together: and the summe will be this, that the Legall keeping of Gods word requireth that it be done in all things, and at all times, and in the most exactest maner, that in justice is due or can be exacted at our hands. And this is that which I call the *Legall* keeping of Gods word. But thus and in this sense never any

any man was able to keepe the Law, save only the first *Adam*, while he stood in his innocency, and **C H R I S T** the second *Adam*, who never lost it. This also is further confirmed by that of the Apostle, where he concludeth, *that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God. Gal. 3. 11. and ver. 10.* that *as many as are of the workes of the Law, are under the curse; because it is written, Cursed is everyone, &c.* Hee meaneth, that whosoever is to bee judged according to the rule of the Law without mercie procured by **C H R I S T** for the mitigation of this rigour, and for a favourable interpretation of the Law; that man
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is in a cursed and damnable estate; because no man on earth can ever bee able to keepe the Law in this exact maner. And hence it is, that the Angels, who were liable to this exact rule of Gods Law, and by their creation were made able so to performe it; because they committed one sinne against it, & that once onely, were rejected without mercie. And so *Adam*, being by his creation in the like state and condition, that is, alike subject to the exact rule of the Law; for one offence once committed by him, was cast out of Gods favour, and should have so continued for ever, for any help that the Law or the rule of justice

justice could afford him. And had not CHRIST our Lord come in as a Mediator to make peace and establish a new covenant of grace, far different from that of the Law; both hee and wee all had perished, and beene deprived of heaven and happinesse for evermore. Thus wee see, what the legall keeping of Gods word is: and that no man living is able to keepe it in this sense. And therefore this is not the keeping, which our Saviour commendeth unto us in this place; as a meanes, that may make us blessed, when hee saith, *Blessed are they, &c.*

I I. But secondly, there is an other kinde of keeping of Gods word, called by the
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Learned, *Evangelicall* : and that is, when we so keep & performe this word & Law of God, as CHRIST doth require in the Gospell, and as God for CHRISTs sake doth accept at our hands, in steede of that other of the Law. Now this rule of obedience prescribed in the Gospell doth mitigate the rule and rigor of the Law in two things. (1.) Because it granteth a pardon to some kinde of finnes : and (2.) because it accepteth of a mans repentance after any the most hainous sin cōmitted.

I. It granteth a pardon to some finnes. For though it allow or approve no sin, yet it pronounceth not damnation against every sin : as
name-

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namely not against any sins of *infirmities*; such as are sins of ignorance; which had we knowen, wee would not have committed; and finnes of subreption, which escape without observing of them, and which, if we had noted and observed, we would not have done them; and finnes of violent tentation, which by reason of some sudden assault, do sway our passions against the right rule, and sometimes by feare, and sometimes by joy, & sometimes by hopes, do carie us away, before wee have leisure to bethink our selves, and in coole blood to consider what wee are a doing. Such sins, as these, Divines call finnes of *infirmities*, because

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cause they arise not out of an evill purpose of the minde, but out of humane frailtie, from which wee shall never be free, as long as we live in this body of corruption. And if men committ such sinnes, as these; the Gospell condemneth the sinnes as evill, & repugnant to Gods Law, but it condemneth not the sinner for them, so long as he disliketh and detesteth them in his sober thoughts and resolution. Thus Saint Paul did, when speaking of such like sinnes, hee cried out as a man undone; *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. 7.24.* For such sinnes as these, the Gospell

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Gospell condemneth us not: it onely condemneth men for deliberat consent, when they yeeld obedience to knowen sinne, and against conscience transgresse the Law.

From hence it is, that the Apostle, deliivering unto us the rule of the Gospel, saith; *Let not sinne therefore reigne in your mortall bodies, that yee should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. 6. 12.* In this passage, when he saith, *Let not sin*; by this word he meaneth the inbred corruption of nature, which wee brought with us into the world, and that habit of sinfulnessse, which wee have since contracted by our custome in sinning, and by
P which

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which we are every day solicited to the practice of actual sin. And because this sinfulnesse doth tempt and sway men to sin, therefore the Apostle saith of it, *Let not sin reigne, &c.* (2.) when he saith of this sinfulnes, *Let it not reigne* in your mortall bodies, he meaneth that it should not beare sway, and carie away our consent, to act what it suggesteth, and to do what it commandeth. So *S. Augustin* expounds this word. [*Non dixit, Non sit, sed, Non regnet. Inest peccatum, quum delectaris; regnat, si consenseris.*] The Apostle, said not (saith hee) *Let not sin bee in your mortall bodies; but let it not reigne.* It is in thee when it tickleth

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tickleth with delight ; but it reigneth in thee if it draw thee to consent. August. in Psal. 50. pag. 175. B. Yea , and so the Apostle expoundeth his own meaning , when hee addeth in the next words , Let not sin reigne that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof : noting hereby , as a learned (a) Prelat of our Church hath observed) that then sin is said to reigne in us , when we give obedience to it , to fulfill the lusts thereof. (3.) In that the Apostle saith not , Let not sin be within you , or , Let it not tempt you , or , Let it not please and tickle you with delight ; but Let it not reigne in you , by drawing you to obey it : this giveth us to understād , that though

(a) D.
Abbot,
true Ca-
tholik,
cap. 11.
pag. 281.

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it be a miserie to be tempted by our lusts, and a sin to bee tickled and delighted with them, when we are tempted by them; yet the Apostle now delivering the precepts of the Gospell, and the rules, by which Christians, according to the *new Covenant* of grace are to bee regulated, doth not charge men so deeply, as to forbid them all tickling delights: he only requireth that sinne do *not* reigne, and that men do not obey it by consenting unto it. This is the rule prescribed by the Gospell, and here commended to us by our Apostle, and as *many, as walke according to this rule, peace shall be upon them, as upon the Israel of God.* Other finnes

sinnes, such as I called sins of infirmitie or humane frailtie, to which we do not give deliberat consent, these are pardoned in the blood of the Lamb. But if any man sin against this rule, by consenting to sin, or acting it; and so suffer sin to reigne in him: the Apostles sentence will take holde on him, *Bee not deceived: Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdome of God.* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. This explication of this point was for the substance of it long since delivered by the learned

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(b) Aug.
de verb.
Domini,
Serm. 5.
cap. 6.
pag. 51.

Father S. Augustin. (b) [*Aliud est non concupiscere, aliud, post concupiscentias non ire.*] It is one thing, (saith hee) not to lust, which the Law commandeth, when it saith, *Non concupisces*, Thou shalt not lust: and an other thing, not to follow after our lusts; which an other Scripture commandeth, when it saith, *Go not after thy lusts.* Eccus. 18. 30. For (as that learned Father further explaineth the point) [*Non concupiscere, perfecti est,*] Not to lust, or not to covet that which is unjust, is the propertie of a perfect Saint, whose habitation is in the Church Triumphant in Heaven. But [*post concupiscentias suas non ire, pugnantis est, luctantis est, laborantis est,*]

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est,] Not to go after a mans
lusts, by obeying their com-
mand, and by doing what
they do prescribe, is the
propertie of a man, that stri-
veth and fighteth against sin,
and laboureth under the bur-
den of corruption; such as
they are who live in the
Church Militant here upon
earth. (c) In an other place,
he speaketh to the same pur-
pose. For whereas the Apo-
stle had said, *Fulfill not the
lusts of the flesh. Gal. 5.16.* he
descanteth on those words
in this maner; [*Melius qui-
dem erat implere, quod Lex
dixit, Ne concupiscas,*] It
were better, (saith he) to ful-
fill that which the Law saith,
Thou shalt not lust; for this is
the perfection of righteousness:

(c) De
Temp.
Ser. 45.
cap. 3.
pag. 215.

P 4

but

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but because we cannot now fulfill this, let us at least fulfill that, which is elsewhere said, [*Post concupiscentias tuas ne eas,*] Go not after thy lusts.

This then is one thing, wherein the Gospell doth moderat the rigour of the Law; that whereas the Law requireth perfect obedience in every point, & for every breach pronounceth a curse and a damnatory sentence; the Gospell beareth with the sinner, and pardoneth him his finnes of infirmitie and humane frailtie, if so be, he giveth not approbation or assent thereto in his coole blood and deliberat thoughts.

2. Secondly, the Gospell doth herein mitigat the rigour

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gour of the Law, because the Law for one offence once committed, doth condemne a man without leaving him any way or meanes of recovery : but the Gospell on the contrary side accepteth of a mans repentance, and upon his repentance giveth him a pardon. This rule of the Gospell is delivered by our Saviour, when he saith, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Matt. 9. 13.* And by the Apostle, when speaking of the new Covenant made in Christ, hee saith in the person of God, who is the Author of this Covenant; *This is the Covenant, that I will make with them.—I will put my Law*

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into their minde, &c. Heb. 8. 10. And then going on to reckon up the priviledges of this new Covenant, ver. 12. he addeth, I will be mercifull to their unrighteousnesse, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. And to the same purpose the Prophet Ezekiel, (for it is a sentence of the Gospell, though it be written in the olde Testament, as many other are :) If (saith he) the wicked will turne from all his sinnes, that he hath committed, and keepe all my statutes, and do that, which is lawfull and right; all the transgressions, that hee hath committed, they shall not bee mentioned unto him, or shall not be named against him. Ezek. 18. 21. And

And *vers.* 30. Repent and turne your selves from all your transgressions : so iniquitie shall not bee your ruine. By all this it appeareth, that in the Covenant of grace confirmed by CHRIST our Redeemer, there is place left for repentance, even after knowen and reigning sinnes committed; and upon this repentance joyned with forsaking of sin, free pardon is promised to the offender.

The summe of all is, that the Gospell, though it require obedience to Gods commandements, as the Law also doth; yet it *qualifieth the exactnesse* and rigour of the Law, partly because it doth not cast men off

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off for finnes of infirmitie, and partly because it accepteth of repentance for voluntarie and reigning finnes. And let this be said for answer to the second question.

3. *Quest.* The third is, whence and how is it, that men are able to do thus much; that is, so to keepe the Law, as in the favourable construction may bee accepted? For the Apostle saith that *by nature wee are the children of wrath*: and if of wrath; how is our service accepted? And againe, as the same Apostle saith, *Wee are dead in sins and trespasses*: and can the man that is dead in sin, doe the workes of spirituall life, or such, as hee,

Ephes. 2.
13.

hee doth , who is alive to
God ?

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Ans. In Scriptures we find
two principles of obedi-
ence or of serving of God
aright : the one is nature,
and the other is grace. By
Nature , I meane all the en-
dowments of the reasonable
soule , which wee have , as
men by naturall generation
from *Adam* ; And by *Grace* ,
those heavenly qualities and
endowments , which wee
receive by spirituall regene-
ration from **C H R I S T**.
Both these are mentioned
in Scriptures , as principles
of obedience to Gods word ;
but the former , as a false
principle , by which men
may imagin themselves en-
abled for Gods service , and
for

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for the performance of his will; but indeede are not. The later of these, that is, Grace, is the true principle of obedience; & that where-soever it is planted, doth enable the soule, to keepe Gods commandements according to the Evangelicall and favourable construction of the Gospell.

This is proved in both the parts thereof by that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 15. Where speaking of the abilities of nature, hee saith, *The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishnesse unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* In which passage of the Apostle, wee may

may note (1.) the truth delivered by the Apostle, *The naturall man doth not, neither can hee receive the things of Gods spirit.* He meaneth, that though a man should teach and instruct him in the mysteries of salvation, yet hee is uncapeable of instruction; hee doth not acknowledge their truth, neither can he conceive the mystery contained in them. And if he cannot know and acknowledge them, much lesse can hee do and performe, what they require at his hands. (2.) we may note the reason or the prooffe hereof, and that is, because the *mysteries of heaven are foolishnesse to the naturall man*; and the reason againe thereof is, because
they

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they are spiritually discerned.

By this it appeareth , that the onely principle , which enableth a man for the right judging and discerning of heavenly things, is the grace of Gods Spirit, which the naturall man wanteth. And hence it followeth , that as a man cannot live without a soule , nor see without an eye , nor heare without an eare , because these are the grounds & principles, from which life and sight and hearing do flow : so no man can know and serve God aright without Gods Spirit enlightening and enabling him by his grace , because this is the principle , from which all both spiritual actions and abilities do spring.

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The like to this wee have againe in the same Apostle, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Wee are not sufficient of our selves, to think any thing, as of our selves: but our sufficiencie is of God.* Here the Apostle first removeth the false principle, *Wee are not sufficient of our selves;* No, not to think a good thought, much lesse to do the good workes that are commanded in GODS Law. (2.) Hee laieth downe the true principle of all our abilitie in Gods service, *Our sufficiencie is of God.* And hence it is that the Apostle saith of himselfe, *I can do all things through CHRIST, that strengtheneth mee.* Philippians 4. 13. And 1 Corinthians 15. 10. *By the grace*

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*grace of God I am what I am :
 and his grace was not in mee
 in vaine : but I laboured more
 abundantly then they all ; yet
 not I, but the grace of God,
 that was with mee. Where
 (1.) when hee saith , His
 grace was not in me in vaine,
 but I laboured, &c. he shew-
 eth what he could and did
 do ; that is , hee served God
 with great zeale in the mini-
 stery of the Gospell. And
 (2.) when he saith , Yet not
 I but the grace of God , &c.
 he sheweth what the ground
 of this labouring facultie in
 him was : and that both ne-
 gatively by removing the
 false ground, Yet not I, that
 is, not I as I, or, not I of
 or by my selfe : and affirma-
 tively , by setting downe
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is a meanes of blessednesse.

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the true ground, Not I, but
the grace of God.

The conclusion of all is ;
By nature and of our selves,
we can not do Gods will, or
keepe his word, so as may
be accepted of him; because
by nature *we are dead in sinne,*
& *by nature we are children of*
wrath : but by the grace of
God in JESUS CHRIST,
enabling us thereto, we can
and do keepe the word of
God according to the rule
of the Gospell, and so as it is
accepted of God to eternall
life.

From hence wee may
see the great priviledges
that a Christian man and
woman hath by being in
CHRIST; more then the
rest of the world have : for
example

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example, (to give the Reader a short list of them) such as these are.

1. He is endued with power from above to keepe Gods word and do his commandements, which the rest of the world who are out of CHRIST, can not do. For (1.) they do not know, nor can they discern the things of God. But God *revelleth them to his children by the Spirit.* 1 Cor. 2. 10. (2.) By nature and of themselves men cannot think a good thought: but God *worketh in his children both to will and to do that which is good.* Phil. 2. 13. And lastly, of our selves and by the power of nature, wee know not how to pray for the things that
we

we want, as we ought: but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us with groanings, that can not be expressed. Rom.

8. 26. Thus the childe of God, by grace received from his heavenly father, is enabled to serve God for the saving of his soule, which abilitie they have not, who have not CHRIST for their Saviour and Redeemer.

2. The childe of God hath this priviledge above others, that the service, which he doth by the helpe of grace, though it be weak and unperfect, yet being upright and sincere, is accepted with God, as if it were perfect and wanted nothing.

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nothing. For of him that is meant, which the Apostle saith, *If there bee a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that, that he hath not.* 2 Cor. 8. 12.

3. Those sentences of Gods word, which are *Legally* meant of the unregenerat man, and therefore containe a curse against him: are *Evangelically* understood of those, which are in CHRIST, and serve to direct him by the way of righteousness to eternall life. For example, that sentence of * *Moses*, wherein he requireth a performance of all things that are written in the Law, if it be applied to a man out of CHRIST,

* Deut.
27. 26.

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is a meanes of blessednesse.

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it carieth in it the sentence of his condemnation ; because he keepeth not nor can not keep that Law : and therefore hee remaineth liable to the Curse , there denounced , *Cursed is every one, that confirmeth not, &c.* And to this purpose , the Apostle urgeth this place *Gal. 3. 10.* But if the same sentence bee applied to a true Christian ; it speaketh no condemnation to him , it is rather a commendation of his integrity and piety ; because hee keepeth this Law , so as God requireth of him in the Gospell. In this sense , it is said of *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* , that they walked in all the commandements and ordinances of
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of the Lord blamelesse. Luk. 1. 6. And so it is said of Iosias, that he turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soule, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses. 2 King. 23. 25.

These and such like priviledges do belong to him, who is engrafted into CHRIST: and by these, he may encourage himselfe in his calling, and stirre up his heart to cherefulness in Gods service, who hath beene so gracious unto him.

2. Secondly, seeing all our abilitie of keeping of Gods word, commeth only from Gods grace; we may hence learn whom to thank for

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for all the good works that we do. Out of this consideration it is that Saint *Paul* having said, *I laboured more abundantly then they all*; presently addeth in the next words, *yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with mee.*

1 Cor. 15. 10. And so, if any of us bee more fervent and frequent in prayers, then others be, and more strict in the rules of conscience then they be, and more plentiful in the deeds of charitie: he should still remember to add after all; *And yet, it is not I that do this, but the grace of God, that is with mee: that so God, who giveth all, may be praised for all.*

3. Seeing all our abilitie of keeping Gods word,

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is

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is from Gods grace ; wee should againe learne , when we want any grace , whither to go for helpe and supply. If wee want water, we go to the Conduit ; because there is the well head, whence the water floweth : and if wee want health , wee go to the Physician , because the knowledge of diseases and remedies is presumed to be in him : and if wee bee wronged and oppressed, we go to the Justice or the Magistrate , because he hath the sword , that can right and relieve us. And so, if *any of you lack wisdom*, (saith S. Iames) *let him ask of God , who giveth to all men liberally, Iam.1.5.* And so say I , If any among us do want know-

knowledge, to direct himselfe in Gods service ; let him go by his prayers, to God, who *enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.* And if he want patience to beare the crosse, let him go to him for mercy, who is the God of *all patience and comfort.* And if hee want strength to withstand a temptation ; let him go to him, who *suffereth not his servants to bee tempted above their strength, but together with the temptation maketh a way for them to escape, that they may bee able to beare it.* And in a word, if any man want any grace, let him go to him, who is the God of all grace, & from whom *cometh every good & perfect gift.* If we pray

I. Cor.
10. 13.

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to him for grace , and depend upon him for help, and submit to him in the use of the meanes ; there is no doubt , but hee hath what we want , and will do that which we desire.

¶.2.

[II.] The second generall point concerning the keeping of Gods word , is, how and wherein this keeping of the Law is available to happinesse and eternal life.

To this question the answer is , that it availeth or conduceth to happinesse two wayes : (1.) as a condition qualifying mens persons for this glorious estate. And (2.) as a service, which God rewardeth with eternal glory.

I. First

is a meares of blessednesse.

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I. First it conduceth, as a condition required to bee in them that are admitted into heaven. For though God be liberall and bountifull in bestowing of his gifts; and useth to give more, then either we deserve or desire: yet hee is no prodigall or wastfull spender, hee bestoweth them not carelessly, without respecting who and what the men be, that partake of his favours: but he maketh choise of such as bee fit and in some sense * worthy of such mercies.

The Philosopher said [*Benefacta male locata malefacta arbitror,*] *Good deedes ill placed* (and so they are, when they are bestowed on unworthy men;) *I count to be evill, not*

*I meane a worthinesse, which maketh a man fitt to receive a favour; and not a worthinesse, which maketh him able to deserve it.

Q 3

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good works. And therefore God, though for his great bounty, he be said to be the *Father of mercies*, and the *God of consolation and comfort*, whose mercies are over all his works: yet giveth hee not heaven and happinesse promiscuously to all men. But, as when the sonnes of *Zebedee* desired to sitt, one on *CHRISTS* right, and another on his left hand in his *Kingdome*; our *LORD* answered those importunat *Beggars*, *To sitt upon my right hand and upon my left, is not mine to give, but it shall bee given to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father.* Matt. 20. 23: So it is true of every degree of blessednesse, and every mansion in *GODS* King-

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Kingdome, it shall be given to them onely, for whom God hath prepared it. And who those bee, our Saviour hath tould us, when he saith, *Come yee blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave me meate, I was thirsty, and ye gave mee drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in, &c. Matt. 25. 34.* Where (1.) when he saith, *Come ye blessed, receive the Kingdom prepared for you:* he sheweth that they are blessed men, and partakers of Gods Kingdome for whom God had prepared it long before. And (2.) when he saith, *for I was hungry, &c.* hee sheweth who and what maner of

Q 4 men

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men they bee, for whom he prepared this kingdom: and that is, they be such, as have served God by works of mercie & duties of an holy life.

This point may further bee cleared by two reasons or arguments.

I. *Arg.* Because the Scripture doth not allot any place in heaven for wicked and ungodly men, but still shutteth them out of the heavenly Jerusalem. Saint *Iohn* having spoken of the glory of the holy Citie, addeth withall, *Without are dogs, and forcerers, and whoremongers, and murtherers, and idolaters, & whosoever loveth or maketh a lie. Apoc. 22. 15.* And of the man, who had not on, the garment of holi-

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holinesse and a godly life, the doome was; *Binde him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darknesse, &c. Matt. 22. 13.*

And so of him that imployed not his talents of grace to Gods glory, the sentence was, *Cast yee the unprofitable servant into outer darknesse:*

there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 25. 30.

Where (1.) when hee saith, *Cast him into darknesse*, that implieth, that the place of his abode, is a place contrary to heaven. For heaven is a place of light and glory.

The glory of the Lord doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Apoc. 21.

23. And therefore the place of these mens abode being

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to him for grace , and depend upon him for help, and submit to him in the use of the meanes ; there is no doubt , but hee hath what we want , and will do that which we desire.

¶ 2.

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a place of darknesse, much like to some deep dungeon, wherein a man can neither see hand nor foot, it followeth, that therefore the wicked are in a place, as contrary to heaven, as darknesse is to light. (2.) When hee saith, Cast him *into outer darknesse*, or darknes, which is without, that sheweth that both the sinner and the place of his abode is without the Kingdome of heaven. And hence also it is, that S. Paul saith of them that obey not the Gospell, that they shall bee *punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* 2 Thess. 1. 9. Heaven then and the presence of

is a meanes of blessednesse.

of God is no place for wicked and ungodly men. And there is great reason, why it should be so.

Rat. 1. First, because, if the wicked should be there, they would disturb the quiet peace, and the happie estate of Gods Saints. It was the devise of a cruell tyran to tie *dead and living* bodies together; that as the *dead* carcase did putrifie, it might stifle the living with its stinch; and corrupt his flesh with the rottennes & putrefaction. And a like torture it would be to the holy *Angels*, if they were tied to a company of *Divels*; & so to the *Saints* of heaven; if they were coupled with *wicked men*. Againe *Solomon* saith, *It*

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bus ora:
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morre
necabat.
Virgil.
Æneid.
lib. 8. pag.
318. ver.
26.

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is better to dwell in the corner of an house top, then with a brawling woman in a wide house. Pro. 1.9 : and of *Lot* it is said, that he *vexed his righteous soule with the unlawful deeds* of the Sodomits, among whom he lived. *2 Pet. 2.7,8.* And it is storied of a poore * Indian, that having tasted deeply of the Spanish crueltie and pride, he refused to go to heaven, if the Spaniard were there. Nor is there any of us, that would bee content to dwell in the house with a scould or a railor, or a quarreller or a drunkard : wee would leave them house and all, rather then bee continually troubled with their company. And so, if drunkards and whoremasters &

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murderers and liers and railers and uncleane persons should bee admitted into heaven, it might make the Saints of heaven even weary of that blessed place: certainly, it would much disquiet and disturb their peace and blessed condition, which the LORD of heaven may not in wisdom or with any reason endure. This then is one reason, why wicked men should not bee received into heaven, among those blessed soules.

Rat. 2. Because it would be a dishonor to God, to have such vile persons among his servants, and in the chiefeſt place of his Kingdom. *Herein* (saith our Saviour) *is my Father glorified, that ye beare much*

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much fruit. Ioh. 15. 8. He meaneth fruits of righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST to the praise and glory of God, as the Apostle speaketh. Philip. 1. 11. And if God be glorified by works of righteousness, then he is dishonored by iniquity and sinne. Besides, it is said of the Jews, that through breaking of the Law, they dishonored God, and that God was blasphemed through them among the Gentiles. Rom. 2. 23, 24. And if it be a dishonour to God to have wicked servants here in the Church Militant; how much more dishonorable would it bee, to have sinfull servants in the Church Triumphant; which is the Palace of his King-

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Kingdome. And therefore as David said, *He that worketh deceit, shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies, shall not tarie in my sight. Psal. 101. 7:* So may our God say, and that upon farre greater reason, No wicked person shall dwell in my house, nor no ungodly man shall abide in my presence. No, saith our Saviour, *At the end of the world, the sonne of man will send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdome, all things that offend, and them which do iniquitie. Matt. 13. 40, 41.*

Rat. 3. It is against all reason, that they who have given themselves to all evil, should receive the greatest good.

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good. The Apostle saith, *It is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them, that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us.* 2 Theff. 1. 6. Where, when hee saith, *It is a righteous* or a just thing with God; he implieth that God should be unjust, if either he should give heaven to them who have served the divell, or denie it to them, that have served God. And because God cannot be unjust; therefore wicked men must be punished; and because there is no punishment in heaven, therefore wicked men must bee excluded thence.

2. *Arg.* A second Prooffe or argument, to shew that
the

the keeping of the commandments is a necessary condition required of them that shall be blessed, is, because God hath assigned hell, as the proper habitation of all ungodly persons. It is said of *Iudas*, that when in despaire of mercie hee had hanged himselfe, hee went [*eis τὸν ἴδιον τόπον*] to his proper place, or, (as our Translation hath well rendred the word) *to his owne place*. Where, there is no doubt, but hee meaneth hell, whither *Iudas* went for his transgression: and he calleth hell *his owne* or his proper place, (1.) because he had deserved and purchased it by his sin. For as it is said *ver. 18. Hee purchased a field with the re-*
ward

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ward of iniquity; so it is true, that he purchased hell with the practice of his iniquitie. (2.) It is called *his own place*, because God had assigned and appointed that place to *Iudas*, and all such, as *Iudas* was, who sell CHRIST either for profit or pleasure. And for this cause it is, that the Judge at the last day, will say to the wicked, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Divell and his Angels*. And if hell be the place deserved by the wicked, and destinated to them by Almighty God; then heaven can be no place; to receive such persons in. And therefore if these men go out of the world without repentance, they go to hell with-

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without all redemption. And by this it appeareth, that the keeping of Gods word, is a necessary condition, required to the qualifying of that person, that shall bee made partaker of blessednes & an happie life. And this is the first consideration, in respect whereof the keeping of Gods word is availeable to eternall life.

II. A second is, that the keeping of Gods word is availeable to salvation, as a service or worke, whose reward is blessednesse and eternall life.

For the clearing of this, I will set downe three conclusions.

1. Concl. Blessednesse is the reward of well doing,
or

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or (which is all one) of the keeping of Gods commandments. This may be proved first in generall, and then in particular.

1. In generall thus: *David* saith, *The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether*: And then he addeth, *Moreover, by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.* Ps. 19. 9, 11. And Ps. 58. 11. *Verily (saith hee) there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God, that judgeth in the earth.* And so our Lord saith of himselfe, that when hee cometh to judge the world, he will reward every man according to his work. Matt. 16. 27. And *S. Paul*, *God (saith hee) will*

render

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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render to every man according to his deedes. To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seeke for glorie and honour and immortality, eternall life; but unto them, that are contentious, and doe not obey the truth—indignation and wrath. Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8. Where (1.) when he saith, God will render—according to works; he sheweth what the rule is, by which God will proceed in judging of the world, namely according to mens works. (2) When he saith, *To them who by patient, &c.* he explaineth that rule by particular instances. He will render to men according to their workes; 1. to them which continue in well-doing, he will render eternall

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nall life as their reward, and to them, that are contentious and disobedient, shall be indignation and wrath. By all which thus much is apparent, that in generall God rewardeth well-doing with blessednes and eternall life.

2. Now in the 2. place, let us consider how God rewardeth particular and speciall vertues; and wee shall finde, (1.) that hee rewardeth *Martyrdome* and patience in suffering for **CHRIST** with blessednes and eternall life. So saith our Saviour; *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousnesse sake: for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. Blessed are yee, when men revile*

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you and persecute you, &c. for great is your reward in heaven.

Matt. 5. 10, 11, 12. (2.) Hee rewardeth mercifulnesse to CHRISTs Disciples or Confessors; He that giveth a cup of cold water onely to a Beleever, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward. Matt. 10. 42.

(3.) He rewardeth almsdeeds to the poore and needie. So our Saviour; When thou makest a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, the blinde: and thou shalt be blessed. For thou shalt bee recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Luk. 14. 13, 14. (4.) Affiance in God and his promises, hath a promise of reward. So the Apostle, Cast not away your confidence, which hath

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hath great recompense of reward. Heb. 10. 35. (5.) Faithfulnesse and obedience in servants, toward their earthly masters, hath a reward from God farre more then their service is to men : Servants (saith the Apostle) obey in all things your Masters—not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singlenesse of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do (in your service to your masters) do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord yee shall receive the reward of the inheritance. Col. 3. 22, 23, 24. Thus the Scripture goeth before us in diverse particular duties, shewing how God doth reward them; and by these giveth

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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giveth us example, how to judge of all the rest. And from hence the conclusion is apparent and cleare, that both in generall and in each particular, heaven and happiness is the reward of well-doing.

2. *Concl.* This reward of blessednesse allotted to good works, is for the measure of it, squared & proportioned according to the goodnesse of the works. For though all good works are rewarded with blessednesse, Yet all are not rewarded in the like measure and degree. Those good works, which excell other in goodnesse shall exceed other in the greatnesse of the reward. For every man (saith the Apostle) shall

R receive

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receive his owne reward according to his owne labour.

I Cor. 3. 8. Hee speaketh there of some that planted, and some that watered, and of them he saith that every one shall receive his owne reward. Hee meaneth, hee that planteth, shall receive the reward of a planter, and he that watereth, shall have the reward of a waterer. To the like purpose our Saviour saith, He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophets reward: and, he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous mans reward. Matt. 10. 41. By which speeches, this is implied, that there is one kinde of reward belonging

ging to a prophet doing his
dutie in his place, and an
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teous man, as hee is righ-
teous. And hereto agreeth
that of the prophet; *They
that be wise, shall shine, as the
firmament, and they that turn
many to righteousness, as the
starres for ever and ever. Dan.
12. 3.* The conclusion is
cleare, the *greatnesse* of the
reward is squared accor-
ding to the *goodnesse* of the
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3. *Concl.* This reward of
well-doing is due to it, not
for the worthinesse of the
work, but by vertue of Gods
promise.

By vertue of Gods *promise*
I grant it to be due. For God
hath promised heaven to

R 2 good

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good works , as hath beene shewed already : and promise is due debt , as wee use to speake , and all men do acknowledge. Even a mans word tieth him to performance , & Gods word must needes tie him much more. From hence it is, that the Apostle speaking of the crown of glorie laied up in heaven for thē that serve God aright; stileth God by the name of a *righteous or just* judge in bestowing of that reward, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. And in an other place , God (saith hee) *is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love.* Heb. 6. 10. Where (1.) when hee saith that God *doth not forget* their good works , hee meaneth that he leaveth them not unre-

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unrewarded. And (2.) when he saith, that *God is not un-just* to forget them; he implieth, that God should bee unjust, if he did not reward their labour in his service. But he speaketh more directly to the same purpose, *2 Thes. 1.6, 7. It is a just thing with God, (saith he) to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, which are troubled, rest with us.* Where wee may note, that it is a point of justice in God, as well to reward the patient suffering of Martyrs and Confessors, as the wrong oppressures of persecutors and evill doers. Be it granted then, that a reward is due to well-doing, by vertue of Gods promise, who for our

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encouragement hath tied himselfe by this bond. But yet notwithstanding, there is no *merit* or worth in our best works, by which wee may laie claime to such a reward. This is cleare by the words of a *S. Paul*, who speaking of Martyrdome and patience in persecution for *CHRIST*s sake, which is one of the most glorious works, to which *CHRIST* hath promised his reward; yet even of this hee saith, *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to bee compared with the glory that shall be reveiled. Ro. 8. 18. And 2 Cor. 4. 17. Our light affliction, (saith hee) worketh for us a more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.*

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glory. Where by elevating our service in suffering for CHRIST, and amplifying the reward, that is given unto us for it; he plainly sheweth that there is no equality or proportion betweene the work and the reward. Our Saviour also, *when we have done all things that are commanded us,* (And yet who is there that doth so? but upon supposition that we have done all,) yet he teacheth us to say unto God, *Wee are unprofitable servants: wee doe that which is our duty to doe. Luk. 17. 10.* Hee meaneth, that because it is no more, then our duty doth binde us to, therefore we cannot plead merit or desert; God oweth us

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no thanks for it, no more then a master oweth thanks to his servant, when he hath done, what he is bound by his place to do.

I conclude then that the reward of blessednesse promised to well-doing, is due by Gods promise, and not for the worth of any works.

And now out of all these things laied together, the conclusion followeth, which I propounded in the beginning, that the keeping of Gods word is availeable to happinesse, as a service, to which eternall life is promised for a reward. And hence we have these deductions for our further use.

I. Seeing holinesse is a necessary condition required
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unto blessednesse ; this may be for an Admonition to all evill doers , who live in any sin against conscience. They may hence take notice how fearfull their state is for the present , and how needfull it will be for them to begin a better life. For I suppose, there is no man living so desperatly madd , but desireth that he may be happy: nor is there any man among Christians , but knoweth that happinesse is no where to be had , but with God in heaven : and now it appeareth by the declaration of this point , that no evill doers , shall ever enter into that place. Take a view , if ye please , of all the ungodly men in the world ; and ye

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will not finde that ever any one of them hath been heretofore, or shall hereafter bee received in at heaven gates. In heaven, I confesse, there are a *great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations and kinreds and peoples and languages:* but among all these, there is not one *drunkard*, nor one *adulterer*, nor one *slanderer*, nor one *oppressor*, nor one *deceiver*, nor one *liar*, nor any one *evill doer*. Again, in heaven there is no defect or want of roome. *In my Fathers house*, said our Lord, *there are many mansions.* *Ioh. 14. 2.* There is a mansion for the Prophets: they are in the *Kingdome of God.* *Luk. 13. 28.* And there is a mansi-

mansion for the Apostles: *They shall eate and drink with CHRIST in his Kingdome, and sitt on thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.*

Luk. 22. 30. And there is a mansion for the Martyrs: *they follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. Apo. 14. 4.*

There is a mansion for the penitent thiefe: *this day (saith our Saviour) shalt thou bee with mee in Paradise.*

Luk. 23. 43. And, in a word, there is a mansion for every righteous man: *they shall shine forth, as the sun, in the Kingdome of their father.*

Matt. 13. 43. And in these mansions are lodged all nations and countries in the world. *They shall come from the East and from the West, from*

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from the North, and from the South: and shall sit downe with Abraham and Isaac and Iacob in the Kingdome of God. Luk. 13. 29. But now on the contrary side search the book of God throughout, from the beginning of *Genesis* to the end of the *Revelation*; and see whether ye can find any mansion, any roome, any hole reserved for drunkards, or harlots, or whoremasters, or deceivers, or slanderers, or any other such wicked and ungodly men. Oh then, think upon this, all ye that forget God; turne unto him betime, wash yee, make you cleane, put away the evill of your doings, cease to do evill, learne to do well; that your sins may be made

is a meanes of blessednesse.

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as *white as snow*, and your
soules deare in Gods fight,
and your selves my abecome
citizens of the holy City,
which is above with God.

2. Seeing Gods rewards
in heaven are squared and
proportioned according to
our services & good works;
this may be for the comfort
and encouragement of all
well minded people. They
may bee comforted in that
good, which they have done
already; as *Ezekiah* cōforted
himselſe with the remem-
brance of his upright life.
When he was in his greateſt
ſorow and ſickneſſe, he chea-
red himſelſe by ſaying unto
God, *Remember now, O Lord,*
I beſeech thee, how I have
walked before thee in truth,
and

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and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. Is. 38. 3. And so Nehemiah, Remember me, O my God, (saith he) concerning this: and wipe not out my good deeds, that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof. Nehem. 13. 14. And so may every good Christian pray and expect a blessing from God, for the good deedes that hee hath done, either for Gods house, or for Gods people, or for Gods glory. Herein he hath comfort, that he hath laied up treasure in heaven, which he shall finde with God at the last day, and shall be abundantly recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just. Againe, hereby good men may

Matt. 6.

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Luk. 14.

14.

may be encouraged to well-doing, because they know that their *labour will not bee in vaine in the Lord.* This use the Apostle made of this point. *He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: & he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* And then he addeth, *Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season wee shall reape, if wee faint not.* Gal 6. 8, 9. He meaneth, that as he that soweth much, shall reape the more; so hee that giveth plentifully for Gods sake (for it is of liberality, that hee speaketh in that place;) shall be plentifully rewarded at Gods hands. Where further, because doing of good is compared

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pared to sowing of seede; and we, by the example of the husbandman, are stirred up to sow our seede, without being weary of our labour: we have hence occasion given us, of two good meditations fit for this purpose.

I. *Med.* The first is, that no man thinketh his seede lost, though it rot for a time in the earth; because hee knoweth, that at the harvest it will bring forth 20, or 30, or, it may bee 40, for one. And so, if we give to good uses, if wee relieve the oppressed, & abound in works of devotion; though we do not presently see any profit by them, yet none of them is lost: when the harvest is come

come, the cropp will make a recompense for all, and we shall receive our seede with advantage.

2. *Med.* Among men, they are counted rich men, that have good store of ground for their tillage; & every man is glad, if he can purchase land, where hee may sow in the spring, and then reape the cropp at the harvest. And so every one among us, that desireth to be rich towards God, should bee glad, when hee hath ground to sow his seede of righteousness in; that his cropp may be the greater at the harvest. For example, if we see a poore servant of CHRIST in want and distresse, there is a piece of ground

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ground to sow our feedes of charity in. If we relieve him, wee shall enrich our selves by it. And, if we see a poore man oppressed by a potent neighbour; here is ground to sow our seede of justice in. If we can and do help him to his right, wee shall gaine helpe at Gods hands, an hundred fold more. And if wee meete with a man that is sad and perplexed in minde; here is ground to sow our seede of compassion and comfort in. And if wee help to support and strengthen him in his grief; God will comfort our soules against all perplexities and feare. The summe is, a man cannot bee a loser by doing of good deedes,

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is a meanes of blessednesse.

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deedes, no more then the husbandman is a loser by sowing of his seede. I pray, as our Church doth; *Stirre up, O Lord, the wills of thy faithfull people, that they plentifully bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee bee plentifully rewarded, through* JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

C A P.

CAP. IX.

*Hearing and Doing compared together, and how and with what difference they con-
curre, as joint helpers of our
salvation.*

Hitherto I have spoken of the two duties, of Hearing and Doing of Gods word, severally and apart: now it will helpe us not a little both for understanding the right use of these duties, and for attaining to blessednesse by them; if for conclusion of all, we compare them together, & consider how & in what maner they
con-

concurre to the procuring of our happineſſe. To which purpoſe that I may ſpeake the more plainely and diſtinctly; I will ſet downe that which I have to ſay, in three ſeverall concluſions. And they be theſe.

I. *Concl.* Hearing of Gods word, whether read or preached, is ſo farre forth onely uſefull for a Chriſtians bleſſedneſſe, as it directeth and furthereth him to the keeping of Gods word, and the doing of his will contained in it.

For prooſe hereof there be theſe arguments or reaſons.

I. *Arg.* Hearing of Gods word is therefore availeable to bleſſedneſſe, becauſe by
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it we learne the way to happiness, and are by it persuaded to walk and go on in that way. This to be the use of Gods word heard and read, I have proved already: and other use then this the Scripture reveileth none, nor can any man with reason imagine any other. I now add hereto as an Assumption to that proposition, But the way to blessednesse is by the obedience of Gods Law, and the keeping of his word. This is proved by those Scriptures, which call Gods commandements, his waies, by which he leadeth men to heaven and happiness; and our keeping or observing of those commandements, a walking in that way. In this kinde

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kinde *David* describing the happy estate of a righteous man, saith, *Blessed are they that keep his testimonies : they also do no iniquity , but walke in his wayes. Ps. 119.2,3.* But *Solomon* more directly to this purpose, *Hee is in the way of life, that keepeth instruction. Pro. 10. 17.* Where (1.) when he saith, *Hee that keepeth instruction*, he meaneth such a one, as submitteth himselfe to be guided by Gods word, and doth that which God teacheth him therein. And (2.) when he saith of such a man, that he is *in the way of life*, he meaneth he is going on in the right way to eternall life and happinesse. And to like purpose *David* prayeth, *Teach mee the way of thy*

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thy statutes, and I shall keepe it unto the end. Ps. 119. 33. and so he promifeth, I will run the way of thy cōmandements, when thou shalt enlarge my heart: v. 32. In all which, and many other sayings to like purpose, wee have two things worth our observation: (1.) that the keeping of Gods word, is a walking in Gods way, and (2.) that this way of God, in which we are to walk, is also the way of life and happinesse.

And from hence, the collection is cleare; If hearing do therefore profit us to eternall life, because by it wee learne the right way, that leadeth thereunto; and this way bee nothing else, but the keeping of Gods word:

word: then hearing is only so farre availeable to blessednesse, as it furthereth us to a godly life.

2. *Arg.* In Scriptures Hearing of Gods word is commended unto us, as the *means* that bringeth us to obedience; and the doing of Gods word is set out, as the end, for which Hearing is intended. This, (to go no further) is sufficiently proved out of one booke of the Law, *Deuteron*. I meane, in which the pen-man of the word, doth most clearly and punctually describe the use of Gods Law. In that booke chap. 4. ver. 1. thus *Moses* speaketh to the people, *Hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and judgements, which*
S I teach

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I teach you, for to do them: and ver. 5. I have taught you statuts and judgements, that ye should do so: and ver. 10. God himselfe, faith of his people; I will make them to heare my words, that they may learne to feare me; that is, to serve and obey me. Againe, chap. 5. 1. Heare o Israel (faith Moses) the statuts and judgements, which I speake in your eares this day; that ye may learne them and know them and do them. And ver. 31. God himselfe speaketh, I will speake (faith he) all the commandements and statuts and judgements which thou shalt teach them, that they may doe them. The like speeches are found Deuter. 6. 1, 2. and 31. 12. and elsewhere: but where the

the case is clear, it is needles
to heape up proofs. Thus
much is plaine from hence,
that Hearing is the meanes,
and Doing is the end, for
which Hearing serveth.

Now concerning things,
the one whereof is the
meanes, and the other the
end, the Learned give us
this rule [*finis dat mediis men-
suram,*] the end prescribeth
unto the meanes their quantity
and measure, namely how
much, and how far & how
often they may be used; and
that is, so, as is requisit for
attaining of the end. Others
deliver the rule thus, [*Media
accipiunt amabilitatem, ordi-
nem & mensuram à fine,*] the
desire and order and measure
of the meanes are to be esteemed

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and must bee regulated by the end, for which they are intended, and for which they do serve: so that they are to be used neither more nor lesse, but so as they may further that end. For better explaining of this, take these examples. Health is the end, which both the Physician and the patient do aime at, and Physick is the meanes either to recover or preserve it; and therefore Physick is onely so farre forth good, and to be used in that maner and measure as may further the patients health. Againe, meat and drink and exercise are the meanes; strength and life and vigour are the end for which these meanes were ordained. And there

therefore meat and drink
and exercise are onely so far
forth desiræable, as they are
effectuall to preserve life
and strength. And just so it is
in the case now propounded.
Hearing & learning of Gods
word are the meanes; doing
& performing of that word
is the end for which Hearing
is intended. It followeth,
Therefore hearing is only so
farre forth good, as it fur-
thereth a godly life.

3. *Arg.* Hearing and
learning are exercises onely
fit for a state of imperfecti-
on, where men have neede
of these helps, to bring them
unto, and keepe them in
obedience of Gods Laws.
And for this cause, while we
remaine in this mortall life,

S 3 where.

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where such is our ignorance, that without instructions from Gods word wee know not how to serve him aright; and such is our backwardnesse to good things, that unlesse wee be eftsloones incited and urged to the doing of our duty out of the grounds of Gods word, we would go in a blindefold securitie to hell and destruction: in this life, I say, and while we are subject to these defects & weakneses, there is necessary use of hearing and reading and learning. But in heaven, where is no ignorāce, nor no backwardnesse, nor no such defects & infirmities; there hearing and all helps of perswasion are of no use. To this purpose
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the Apostle telleth us, that *Prophecies shall faile*, and the gift of *tongues shall cease*, and *knowledge*, (* that is, Arts & sciēces serving for instruction,) *shall vanish away.* 1 Cor. 13.8. And he giveth the reason of it in the next words: for (saith he) *we know in part*, and *we prophetic in part*, but *when that which is perfect*, is come; *then that which is imperfect*, shall bee done away. He meaneth that these helps were ordained for a state of imperfection, in which wee have neede of teaching and exhorting, to supplie our defects: but when wee shall bee perfect in knowledge, and shall be ready to serve God without let, then all these meanes of teaching

* Ordinarium decendi munus
Beza.

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and learning shall bee done away. Whence I inferre, that as the Angels in heaven, do not heare Sermons, nor read Scriptures, nor use any other helps of learning or instruction; so, in the life to come, when we also shall be like the Angels in heaven, we shall neither heare, nor read, nor learne any more. And because hearing onely serveth, to instruct us while we know not how to serve God aright, & to perswade us to serve God; while wee may be drawen away from his service: therefore, Hearing of Gods word, profiteth us only so farre, as it serveth to make us better; which is that, which I said in my first conclusion.

II. Concl.

I I. *Concl.* Hearing of Gods word, if it bee separated from doing, is rejected in Scriptures, as a thing of no worth. This is proved,

1. By that saying of our Saviour, *Matt. 7. 26.* Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: or (as S. Luke hath it) He is like a man, that without a foundation built an house upon the earth: against which the streame did beate vehemently, & immediately it fell, and the ruine was great. *Luk. 6. 49.*

2. By that reproofe mentioned in the Prophecie, where it is said of the Jews, to their reproch; *They heare thy words, but they do them not.*

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Ezek. 33. 32. Where expressly hee onely telleth what they did do, but impliedly blameth & reproveth them for so doing.

3. By that exhortation of the Apostle, *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only deceiving your owne selves. Jam. 1. 22.* In which words the Apostle first giveth us a rule concerning Gods word, and that is expressed both affirmatively, *Be yee doers;* and negatively, *not Hearers onely.* And secondly of this rule hee giveth us a reason, because, if a man heare, & do not do, he *deceiveth himselfe.* The meaning is, he thinketh he serveth God, by hearing of his word, & that thereby hee may further his owne salva-

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salvation : but he that thinketh so, deceiveth his owne soule, and will misse of his expectation. The conclusion hence is, Hearing without doing is a labour in vaine, & the practice of a foolish man; and consequently rejected of God, as a thing of no worth.

III. *Concl.* Hearing of Gods word, without practicing what we learne by it; doth hurt the soule, by aggravating of the sinne. This is proved.

1. From the rule of our Saviour; *The servant, that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, &c. for to whomsoever much is given*

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given, of him shall bee much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. Luk. 12. 47, 48. Consider here (1.) a doctrine, *The servant that knew his Lords will, &c.* and (2.) the prooffe of it, *for to whomsoever much is given, &c.* And from both these the conclusion is, that where God giveth a man more meanes and better opportunities of learning and knowing Gods will, there he requireth the more duty; and will inflict the greater judgement, if it bee neglected.

2. From those judgments, which GOD denounceth against them, which do not profit by his word, & other meanes.

meanes of grace. Such as these are, *He that rejecteth me, & receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day. Ioh. 12. 48.* And, this is condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darknes rather then light *Ioh. 3. 16.* And, *If I had not come and spoken unto them; they had not had sinne: but now have they no cloke for their sinne. Ioh. 15. 22.* But it is a cutting sentence to this purpose, which wee reade *Hebr. 6. 7.* *The earth, which drinketh in the raine, that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meete for them, by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that,*
which

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which beareth thornes and briers, is rejected and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to bee burned. The sentence is allegoricall; the plaine sense is, that the men, upon whom G O D bestoweth much meanes of grace; if they be not fruitfull in good works, are lyable to the greater curse, by how much they have had the better meanes. The like is intended also by that parable of the vineyard, *Is. 5. 1, &c.*

The summe that riseth out of all this, is, that the more meanes we have, the more duty we owe, and the more punishment wee shall suffer if wee neglect that duty. Whence againe it followeth that Hearing and

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learning of Gods word, if they do not further our obedience, they increase our judgement. It followeth from hence also, that all the goodnesse, which is in Hearing, is *relative* only; so farre forth as it furthereth our obedience and our keeping of Gods word.

But now on the contrary, the doing of Gods will, is good in and of it selfe: it both pleaseth GOD, and maketh us an immediat entrance into the Kingdome of heaven. So S. Iohn saith, *Blessed are they, that do his commandements, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City. Apoc. 22. 14.* And S. Peter, *If yee do*

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do these things, (saith he) ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall bee ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord & Saviour JESUS CHRIST.
2 Pet. I. 10, 11.

These be the three conclusions, which serve for the explaining of the point. Lay them together, and ye have a full answer to the question. The question is, how and with what difference Hearing & keeping of Gods word, do concur to the procuring of our blessednesse and happy being: and the answer arising from the premisses is, that they do concur as joint causes or helps to happinesse, but in a much different maner.

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They be not [*causa coordinata*,] *causes* of equall and even respect, like two oxen that draw in the same yoke, or like two men that carie one burden betweene them. But they bee [*causa subordinata*] *causes* whereof one is *subordinat* and serviceable to the other; like the needle and the threed, both which concurre to the sewing of a garment together; but the needle maketh the entrance, and the threed knitteth and conjoyneth the parts in one. Or, they be like the preparative and the medicine; both which are joint meanes for recoverie of health: but the preparative maketh way for the medicine, and the medicine it worketh the

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the cure. The substance of my speech is this; Hearing and Doing concurre, as joint helps of happinesse: but hearing maketh way for doing, and doing maketh entrance into glory.

And thus much may suffice for the explication and prooffe of the point propounded. The uses are:

Use 1. Seeing hearing is of no use further then it helpeth us to the doing of Gods will; by this we may see the great follie of those men, who think highly of themselves, and preferre their owne zeale before their neighbours, because they are frequent hearers, and skilfull talkers of Scriptures and religion, though in the
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meane while their practice be not answerable. And such there have beene in all ages, and such there are too many in our age also. This is made good by some examples out of Scripture, & by their application to our own times.

I. *Ex.* The first is that which we finde *Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32.* They speake one to another, every man to his brother, saying, Come I pray you, and heare what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee (saith God to the Prophet) as the people cometh, and they sit before thee, as my people, and they heare thy words, but they will not do them. For with their mouth they shew much love: but their heart goeth after their covetousnesse:

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teousnesse. And lo, thou art
 unto them as a very lovely song
 of one that hath a pleasant
 voice, and can play well on an
 instrument. For they heare thy
 words, but they do them not.
 Note here (1.) their for-
 wardnesse in hearing, de-
 clared three wayes. 1. They
 invite and exhort ech other
 to goe and heare the Pro-
 phet, when hee preached
 Gods word; *Come, say they,
 and heare, what is the word,
 &c.* just as if men should
 now say one to an other,
 Come and let us go to such
 a Lecture, or let us go and
 heare such a Sermon. 2. they
 flock to the Prophet in mul-
 titudes. *They come*, saith the
 Text, *as the people cometh*;
 that is, not dropping in;
 one

one by one , but they throng-in by troupes. 3. They listen to that which is delivered. *They sit* (faith God) *as my people* : that is, devoutly and attentively, waiting what God will say unto them. And thus farre all is well, if it were as sincere in deede , as in shew it seemeth to bee. This was the forwardnesse of this people. (2.) Note their backwardnesse to do what they were taught. *They heare thy words, but do them not* : and with their mouths they shew much love ; but their heart goeth after their covetousnesse. 3. Note Gods censure of this dealing ; *Thou art to them as a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice , and can play well*

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well upon an instrument. Hee meaneth, that they made the like use of the Prophet, that a man would do of a minstrell, and they heard his sermons, as a man would heare a plaic. Thus the Lord censured those hot professors among the Jews: and the like censure agreeth well to the *speculative* and *talking* hearers, of our dayes. They, that frequent Lectures, and flock after sermons, and gape after the preachers words; and yet, when they are gone home, are as ready to slander their neighbours, and as forward to speake evill of Government, and as watchfull to deceive Customers, &c. as ever they were before: these bee the hypo-

hypocriticall Hearers, that *Ezekiell* speaketh of, who shew much love with their mouths, but their hearts go after their unlawfull lusts; and these be the deceitfull hearers, of whom *S. James* saith, that they deceive themselves. And of these I may say, They make no better use of a preacher, then a man would do of a minstrell: that is, to delight themselves with his voice, but not to follow his direction.

2. *Ex.* The second example, that fitteth this purpose, is that in *Ezekiell* chap. 14. set downe at large in many verses together: but summarily comprised in the 7, and 8. verses. The words are;

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are ; Every one—which separateth himselfe from me, and setteth up his idol in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquitie before his face, and cometh to a Prophet to enquire of him concerning mee ; I the Lord will answer him by my selfe. And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a signe & a proverb. &c. In this passage there are two things considerable: (1.) A case propounded concerning the people. And (2) the answer that God maketh unto it. The case is this ; It is supposed, that a man doth not only repaire to the Prophets Sermons in publick, but besides goeth to him in privat , and asketh his direction in points of religion and

and Gods service : and yet
 this man setteth up an idol
 in his heart, and a stumbling
 block before his face : that
 is, he hath some one thing
 or other that he maketh his
 idol, loving and adoring it,
 & looking towards it, as the
 desire of his eyes, more
 then he loveth or adoreth
 the true God, whose word
 he cometh to enquire after.
 This is the case. Now the an-
 swer that God giveth here-
 unto, is, *I will answere him by
 my selfe, I will set my face
 against him, &c.* Applie wee
 this to our times, & it is thus
 much in effect. They, that
 pretend to be more zealous
 & religious then other men
 are; these do not only come
 to heare our sermons in pu-
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blik, but they desire also to have our counsell in privat, and propound cases of conscience, desiring our direction therein. And it is a commendable course, and a ready way to gaine knowledge and understanding by. But if such a man, thus zealous in his way, do notwithstanding set up an idol in his heart; that is, if he have a purpose, or do live in any knowen sinne against his conscience. God will meete with that man in his anger, and cut him off with the wicked, that never enquired after God.

3. *Ex.* A third example may be that spoken of by our Saviour, *Luk. 13. 26* *They shall say unto me,* (saith

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our Lord) we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not, whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquitie. And (as it is Matt.7. 22.) Many will say to me in that day (of the great judgment,) Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderfull works? And then I will professe unto them, I never knew you: depart from mee, ye that work iniquity. Here I consider two things. (1) What these great pretenders to religion did alledge for themselves, and that was, that they had heard CHRIST himselve

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preaching unto them in his own person ; yea that themselves did preach in his name, and (which is yet more) in his name had cast out divels. And hereupon they thought that they had a speciall interest in Christ and his Kingdome. (2.) I consider what our L O R D answered to these allegations ; hee denieth not, but that it was true, that they had heard C H R I S T preaching among them, and that they had taught and done miracles in his name: all this he grants to be true. But he denieth, that for any or all of these, they had any right in him or in his Kingdome ; *I never knew you ; depart from me.* And why ? why, even because

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because ye are workers of iniquity. The application hereof is obvious and easy. If men be workers of iniquity, that is, if they live in any knowen sinne which they will not presently forsake; no hearing of Gods word, though CHRIST himselfe were the preacher; nor no preaching of Gods word, though themselves were honored with that holy calling; no, nor no casting out of diuels, as some even in our daies have pretended to do: neither any, nor all of these things, can gaine them a title to heaven, or a right to blessednesse & eternall life. Let every good Christian then take heede, that himselfe be not caried

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away , with error of the wicked ; who think highly of themselves for their hearing of Sermons , and reading of Scriptures , and reasoning of religion. These are good , if they be well used , that is , if they be made to serve as meanes of pietie and a godly life : if they make us more just , & more sober , and more peaceable , and more charitable , and more conscionable in all our wayes and dealings ; then they are the blessings of God , and prepare men by holinesse to a blessed life. But if they bee separated from sanctitie and a godly life ; then the curse attendeth them , *Depart from mee ye workers of iniquity ; and,*

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Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devell and his Angels: from which God will deliver all them, that feare and serve him.

Vse 2. Seeing Hearing is of no further use, then as it fitteth us for doing; hence we have a good rule to judge of the goodnesse of a Sermon by. For if hearing be no more worth then as it furthereth us to doing: then preaching is of as litle worth, if it bee not fitted for the same end. The reason is, because preaching and hearing, are both of them ordained for the same end: nor would there be any use of preaching if there were no neede of hearing. No man ever preached to an in-

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fant, because he wanteth wit to learn what is taught; nor will any man ever preach to the glorified soules, that bee in heaven, because they have no neede of teaching. Preaching onely is for this purpose, that men, who haue neede of instruction, may learne and make use of what is taught. And therefore, if that hearing bee vaine, which doth not further a godly life, then that preaching is no better then babling, which is not fit to beget godlinesse and vertue. And this note yeeldeth us two practicall rules; one for the Preacher, and an other for the Hearers.

1. *Rule.* The rule for the Preacher is this, that in framing

ming and composing of his Sermon, he should aime at the peoples profiting in an holy life: & all his thoughts and words should be such, as may worke men to the obedience of Gods Law.

For confirmation hereof wee have Gods owne example. *Isa. 48. 17. I am the LORD thy God, (saith hee) which teacheth thee to profit, and leadeth thee by the way, that thou shouldest goe.* I note two things. (1.) When hee saith, *I am the Lord, which teacheth thee*, hee professeth himselfe to bee a preacher, whose office is to teach men the way of eternall life. And (2.) when he saith, *I am the Lord which teacheth to profit:* the word is *לְהוֹדִיעַ* that is, as

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Montanus rendereth it, [*ad proficiendum*,] so as thou maiest profit by it, or, as the vulgar readeth it more plainely, though not so literally, [*docens te utilia*] which teacheth thee profitable things; or, as *Piscator* paraphraseth it, [*apta ad prodesendum*,] such things as are apt or fit to profit them, in goodnesse. And this, as a * Learned Writer enlargeth the sense is, as if he should say, [*non curiosa, non vana, non pomposa, & plausum captantia.*] I teach thee, not curiosities, not vanities, not florishes, and such things as may gain praises and applauses: but I teach thee, (saith the Lord Almighty) such things, as may bee for thy safety here, and

* Corn. à
Lapide.

compared together.

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and thy salvation hereafter.

Thus the wise Lord, the great Pastor and shepheard of our soules, hath left us an example, that we who are Pastors in his Church, should follow his steps. And in these steps did the blessed Apostle tread, who in discharge of his duty, could say to his Scholars, *I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you. Act. 20.20.*

& v. 27. *I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsell of God.* In w^{ch} sentences put together, it is worth the noting, that first he saith, *he kept back nothing that was profitable,* & then, saying the same thing over again, that he declared unto them, *all the counsell of God.* And hence the collection is easie, that therefore

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fore the whole counsell of God, w^{ch} is to be declared & preached unto the people, is onely of such things, as are profitable to happinesse and a blessed life. And now, if any desire to know what these profitable things were, which he used to preach to Gods people; himselfe hath tould us elsewhere, that the summe of his Sermons was, that men should *repent*, and *turne to God*, and *do works meete for repentance.* Act. 26. 20. And Tit. 2. 12. *That deny- ing ungodlines,* and *worldly lusts*, they should live *soberly and righteously and godlily in this present world*: Soberly, by moderation in the use of temporall comforts; and righteously, by just and faire dealing

dealing among men ; and
godlily , by serving God in
the holy duties of religion.
These were the profitable
things which God taught
the people of Israel, and the
Apostle preached in the
Christian Church.

And we that be the prea-
chers of Gods word , and
dispensers of his mysteries,
ought both to imitate *God*
as dear children, *Ephes. 5. 1.*
and to be *followers of the A-*
postle, as hee is of CHRIST.
I Cor. 11. 1. And more par-
ticularly , as God himselſe
taught his people profitable
things ; and as *S. Paul* taught
his Auditors , to repent and
turne unto God , and do
works meet for repentance,
and that they should live so-
berly

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berly and righteously, and
godlily in this present
world : So our Sermons,
both for the matter and
the maner of them, should
be such as that the Hearers
may profit in piety and a
godly life, and by serving
God in holinesse and righ-
teousnesse, may be brought
to heaven & eternall glory.
And therefore, when wee
are at our Studies, framing
our Sermons in privat, and
when we are about to utter
them in publik; wee should
reflect our thoughts upon
every part or passage of our
meditations, questioning
with our hearts (God and
our owne consciences being
the Judges of our thoughts;)
whether such a point in the
Ser.

Sermon, or such a sentence in our discourse, be apt to minister grace to the hearts of the hearers; and such as may further them in the duties of a good life, and in one kinde or other help forward their salvation and happinesse. And if we finde any thing more then this, or otherwise then thus, wee may and ought to blot out that, and cast it away as being either pernicious, or at the best, but superfluous and idle. This course, if wee hold both in penning of our Sermons and in deliveriug of them; we shall approve our selves as *good Ministers* of J E S U S C H R I S T, and may in so doing both save our selves, and them
that

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that heare us. God direct both our hearts, & tongues, so to preach CHRIST, that we prove our selves to bee the *servants* of our people for JESUS sake.

2. *Rule.* The second rule is for the Hearers : and that is , that because a Sermon is no more worth then so farre as it furthereth men to an holy life ; therefore they should desire to heare such Sermons , and ever judge them best , by which themselves may be made better. This rule is to be the more regarded, because in all ages it hath beene so much neglected. For first looke into the olde Testament , and consider the times before our Lords Incarnation ; and there

there ye shall finde that the people of those times were rebellious, lying children, that would not heare the Law of the Lord. They said to the Seers, See not ; and to the Prophets, Prophecie not unto us right things. Speake unto us smooth things, Prophecie deceits. Is. 30. 10. And if a man walking in the spirit, and falsehood, do lie, saying, I will prophecie unto thee of wine & of strong drink, hee shall even bee the Prophet of this people. So saith the Prophet Mic. 2. 11. and he meaneth, that if a man should pretend to be sent of God, and take upon him the office of a preacher; and should withall preach libertie for their lusts, and a freedome to follow their owne

Cap. 9.

owne wills : this would be the onely man in their esteeme and reckoning. They would praise him and paie him, and follow him from towne to towne, and from one parish to an other. Againe, looke into the new Testament; and there yee shall heare our Lord telling the men of his time; *I am come in my Fathers name, and ye receive me not: if an other shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Ioh. 5. 43.* And S. Paul telleth us of after-times, that men would not endure sound doctrine, but after their owne lusts would heape to themselves teachers, having itching eares; and would turn away their ears from the truth, & would be turned unto fables.

2 Tim.

compared together.

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2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Where (1.) when he saith, *Having itching eares*; he meaneth, that they delight to have their eares tickled with such speeches, as may please the fantasie: as on the contrarie the Poet saith of unpleasing speeches, that they *bite and grate the eares of men.* (2.) When hee saith, that they desire, *Teachers after their owne lusts*, he meaneth they desire such, as will preach what they please, and will say that is truth, which themselves fantasie to be so, or at least, which they wish were so. (3.) When he saith of these men, that they *heape such Teachers*; he intimateth that they are not contented with one or two, such as
God

Quid
opus est
tenuas
mordaci
radere
vero
Auricu-
las?

Cap. 9.

God and the Church hath appointed to bee their Pastors, but they runne from place to place, and single out such men for their masters, as is agreeable to their owne humors. This the Apostle did fortell of the later times: and into these times are we now fallen.

For first some there bee, who delight in fine phrases, and wittie turnings: and if they heare such a one, they entertaine him with Hems of applause. But when *Leosthenes* made such a like wordie speech, to the Athenians, *Phocion* said his words were like the *Cypresse tree*, which is goodly and faire to see to, but beareth no fruit. And so, I think, the men who

Καλοὶ
ὄντες καὶ
ὑψηλοὶ
καρπὸν
οὐκ ἔχοντες.
Plu-
tarch.
Apoph.

who most admire such flourish of witt, can hardly say what fruit of godlines they finde in them. Others delight in men, that do glance at autoritie, and in a canting kinde of language, which their followers know whereto it tendeth, do nibble at the orders of our Church, and the Government of the present State. Such a man, if he bee once heard speake in a pulpit, is followed all the town over. Nor is it any marvell: for it hath beene found true in all ages, that nothing is more pleasing to the multitude, then to heare themselves flattered, & their superiours traduced and slandered. See an exāple in *Absalom*, & the people

Cap 9.

people of that time. *Absalom* (saith the Text) rose up early, and stood by the side of the gate. And it was so, that when any man, that had a controversie, came to the King for judgment; then *Absalom* called unto him and said—See, thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the King to heare thee. *Absalom* said moreover. Oh that I were made a Iudge in the land, that every man, that hath any suite or cause, might come to mee and I would do him justice, &c. So *Absalom* stole the hearts of the men of Israel. 2 Sam. 15. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. In this Scripture wee may note two things, (1.) the practice that *Absalom* used: and (2.) the successe that it found. His practice

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was in three things. 1. Hee flattered the Commons, *See, thy matters are right*, and ver. 5. *he gave them his hand*. 2. Hee accused the Government, *There is no man* (saith hee) *deputed of the King to heare thee*; Hee meaneth there was no man, to decide his cause and to do him justice: He did not, nor could not for shame say, that the King did them any injustice; but by accusing his officers, and complaining of those that were about him, he brought the Kings Government into dislike with the people. 3. Hee wished for better Counsellors and Judges, that would right the poore Commons; *Oh that I were made*
Iudge

Cap. 9.

Judge in the land, that men might come to me, and I would do them justice. Such like was the practice of *Absalom*. (2.) But how succeeded it? why, *he stole away the hearts of the people, made them ill affected to the State, and the conspiracie was strong: for the people increased continually with Absalom*, as it is *ver. 12*. Thus it was in times past: we cannot expect any other thing in our dayes, but that if men of place, especially if preachers shall shew themselves popular, humoring the people and slandering the State, this will bee a pleasing way to the multitude: and if a King were as good as *David*, and Bishops as good as the Apostles,

stles, this course would
steale away the hearts of
the people, from the obe-
dience of King and State.
And it is the great iniquitie
of the common sort, that
they delight in such per-
verse Teachers. Such men
are here to be admonished,
that when they come from
such Sermons, they think
with themselves, how they
have thereby profited in
grace and goodnesse; what
good duty they have learned
to performe, what sin they
have learned to subdue, or
what rule they have learned
to better their lifes by. I
only add this more, that
if they or if any man be not
edified by our Sermons, and
made more holy and more
V just

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just and more sober ; then is our preaching in vaine, and their hearing is in vaine, & in vaine it is to them, that God reveiled his will to the world : and better it were that Preachers were dumb, and people were deafe, then that they should abuse Gods word, in such a vaine manner.

Vse 3. Seeing hearing, and learning, and knowing of Gods word, is only so farre good, as it helpeth us to do what God doth command; but Doing of Gods word is acceptable in it selfe, and by it selfe profitable, as an immediat condition, for entrance into Gods Kingdom: hence wee learne, how necessary the keeping of Gods word

word and commandements is. The young man in the Gospell asked of our Saviour, *Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternall life?* and our Lord answered him, *If thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commandements.* *Matt. 19. 16, 17.* David asked of God, *Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle, & who shall dwell in thy holy hill?* and the Lord answered him, *Hee that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evill to his neighbour, &c.* *Pf. 15. 1, 2, &c.* And so ask of *Isai*, how yee may fast to please God; and hee will answere, *It is to loose the*
V 2 bands

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bands of wickednesse, to undoe the heavie burdens, and to let the oppressed go free—to deale thy bread to the hungrie, to bring the poore, that are cast out, to thy house, when thou seest a naked man, to cover him, &c. Is. 58. 6, 7. Ask of Micah, Wherewith thou shalt come before God, to please him: and he will answer, What doth the Lord require of thee: but to do justly, and to love mercie? &c. Micah. 6. 6, 8. Ask of S. Peter, who it is, that is accepted of God; & he will answer, It is he that feareth God and worketh righteousness. Act. 10. 34. Ask of an Angell from heaven, who is a blessed man, and he will answer, Blessed are they, which do his commandements, that

that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in, through the gates into the Citie. Apoc. 22. 14. And whatsoever other like question ye shall ask, the Scriptures will still give you the like answer. It is not inough to heare the word: for hearers, if they be not doers also, deceive themselves. 1am. 1. 22. It is not inough to know Gods will: for the servant that knoweth his masters will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. Luk. 12. 47. It is not inough to professe CHRIST with great zeale: for not every one, that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdome of heaven, but hee that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven, saith

Cap. 9.

our Saviour. *Matt. 7. 21.* It is not inough to fast for sin: for to them *who fasted to strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickednesse,* it was said from heaven, *ye shall not fast, as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is. 58. 4.* It is not inough to preach the Gospel: for if a man do not *keep under his body, and bring it in subjection, after he hath preached unto others, himself may prove a cast-away. I Cor. 9. 27.* Finally, it is not inough to prophecie, and work miracles, and cast out diuels: for unto many such Christ will say at the last day, *I never knew you, depart from mee, yee workers of iniquitie. Matt. 7. 22, 23.* In all which
spee-

speeches and sayings, there is still walking and working and doing: and without doing of good, there is no obtaining of life. Therefore, deare Christians, what ever yee do else, be sure yee do Gods will, and keepe his commandements: do your duty to God, by performing his services of religion; do your duty to men, by observing justice and true dealing; do your dutie to your selves, by watching over your owne soules, that yee may take all opportunities of well-doing. This do, and your soules shall live. And so I end these Meditations with the words of the Text, *Blessed are they, that heare the word of God and keepe it.*

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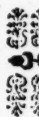
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AN
APPENDIX
TO THE
FORMER TREATISE,
Containing
RULES OF RIGHT
Hearing Gods word.

By HENRY MASON,
*Pastor of S. Andrew Vnder-
shaft, London.*



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RULES OF

RIGHT HEARING

Gods word.

HA VING already spoken of the use and necessity of *Hearing*; it will be seasonable to say somewhat of the *right maner* of hearing. For the best work that is, may bee marred by the misdoing of it. For avoiding of which error in this duty of hearing; our Lord hath given us a short caveat, *Luk. 8.18*: where he saith, *Take heede*

heede how ye heare. And this caveat, being propounded in brief by our Saviour, I purpose, Gods Spirit assisting me, to enlarge with some few notes agreeable to the Text: intending thereby so to regulat our hearing, that wee may profit by it in the duties of Gods service.

1. First then, when our Saviour saith, Take *heede how ye heare*, hee implieth in this word [how,] that we must regard as well the *maner* as the *matter* of the duty: the good work is not inough, unlesse it bee done well. 2. When he saith, *Take heede how*, &c. this word [Take heede] implieth two things; (1.) that there is dāger of erring in this duty, and

and that unlesse we be warie
wee may doe it amisse:
and (2.) that by heedful-
nesse, the danger may bee
prevented. For caveats are
needleffe, where there is no
danger; and fruitlesse where
they do not help to avoid
the danger. And these 3.
the *maner* of doing, the dan-
ger of *mis-doing*, and the
profit of *warinesse* in the do-
ing; are the points, on
which I meane by Gods
grace to insist.

C A P.



CAP. X.

*In the doing of good works, the
maner is to bee respected,
as well, as the matter.*



U R Saviour here
giveth us a Ca-
veat concerning
our manner of
hearing: & this
caveat will appeare to bee
the more full of reason, if we
finde that the like rule is to
bee observed in other the
duties of Gods service. And
that so it is, may be proved
thus:

I. In Scriptures, as God
commandeth the *dutie*, so
he

he commandeth the *due manner* of doing it also. For example, hee doth not onely command us to pray but requireth also, that wee pray in *faith, & without wavering. Iam. 1. 6.* And with *feruencie* and without *fainting. Iam. 5. 16.* and *Luk. 18. 1.* Againe, he doth not onely command us to reade, but that in readding wee *mark and consider. Matt. 24. 15.* And so hee doth not onely command us to heare, but that we *hearken* to his words, and let them *sink downe into our eares. Luk. 9. 44.* and *Aet. 2. 14.* Nor doth he only command us to give almes, but besides, that we do it cherefully, not *grudgingly nor of necessitie*, nor for the *praise and applause*

Cap. 10

plause of men. 2 Cor. 9. 7. and
Matt. 6. 2, 3, 4. And so againe,
if any man speake, let him
speake, as the Oracles of God.
1 Pet. 4. 11. that is, let him
 so speake Gods word, as be-
 seemeth the word of the
 Almighty. And, if any man
 propheticke, let him propheticke
 according to the proportion of
 faith: & hee, that giveth, let
 him do it with simplicity; & he
 that ruleth, let him do it with
 diligence; and he that sheweth
 mercy, let him do it with chere-
 fulnesse. Ro. 12. 6. Moreover,
 when the Apostle saith, *The*
Law is good, if it be used law-
fully. 1 Tim. 1. 8: he implieth,
 that a man may, but ought
 not to use Gods Law in an
 unlawfull maner. And when
 speaking of the course of
 god-

godlineſſe, he ſaith, *So runne,*
that ye may obtaine. 1 Cor. 9.
24: Hee intimateth two
things. (1.) that we ſhould
not onely runne the waies
of Gods commandements,
but runne them in a right
maner. And (2.) that if a
man do not runne in a right
maner, he may loſe his la-
bour & miſſe of his reward.
By all this it appeareth, that
God doth not onely com-
mand the matter of good
duties, but the right maner
of doing them alſo. It fol-
loweth, if we do the thing
that is commanded, yet we
ſin, if wee do it not in the
maner, that is required.

I I. Good duties, if they
be not done in a due maner,
and with their due circum-
ſtances

stances, are rejected of God, as no parts of his service. To this purpose is that which wee reade in the Prophet, *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, & the fat of fed beasts: and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs or of hee goats. When ye come to appeare before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vaine oblations: incense is an abomination unto me: the new Moones and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies I cannot away with: it is iniquitie, even the solemne meeting. Your new Moones and your appointed feasts my soule hateth: they are a trouble unto me:*

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is to be respected.

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me : I am weary to beare them.
And when ye spread forth your
hands, I will hide my eyes from
you ; yea , when ye make many
prayers , I will not heare : your
hands are full of blood. Is. I. II,
12, 13, 14, 15. In this passage
wee may note these parti-
culars : (1.) the works and
services , which these men
performed, and they were
multitude of sacrifices , burnt
offerings of rams , fat of fed
beasts , &c. They were also
keeping of new Moones and
Sabbaths & solemn assemblies,
&c. All which were services
commanded in Gods Law,
and directed and serving to
his glorie. (2.) Consider
the acceptation and enter-
tainment , that God gave to
these services of pietie and
reli-

Cap. 10

religion : and that is 1. he renounceth them, as none of his services; *Who* (saith he) *required these things at your hands?* 2. He complaineth of them, as of heauey burdens, that oppressed him, *I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, &c. : they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to beare them.* 3. Hee sheweth his dislike and detestation of them; *I delight not in the blood of bulls, &c. incense is an abomination unto me: the new Moones and Sabbaths I cannot away with.* 4. Hee threatneth the doers of these services with his high displeasure; *When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you, &c.* This is the welcome that these duties

duties found at Gods hands.

(3.) Consider the reason, why God accepted no better of the services of his owne appointment ; and that is set downe in the last words ; *Your hands are full of blood.* The meaning and intendment of the whole speech is this, that this people dealt unjustly, and tooke bribes and oppressed their poore neighbours : for this the Prophet meaneth, when he saith , *your hands are full of blood.* And because they brought Gods sacrifices, and did the works of his service with polluted hands , and defiled hearts , therefore he rejected both them , and their devotions , though otherwise they were works
of

Cap. 10

of his owne prescribing. And what here is said of sacrifices and Sabbaths & Festivall assemblies, the like is elsewhere said of fasting and humiliation and mourning. *Isa.* 58. 3, 4, 5, 6: and *Zach.* 7. 5, 6. And hence the conclusion is, that the best services of God in every kinde, if they be not performed in an holy maner, and with their due circumstances and conditions, are of no account in Gods sight. It followeth, Therefore not onely the matter of good duties, but the maner of doing them, is required at our hands.

Vse 1. This confuteth their error, who think they have served God well, when they have done the outward works

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works contained in his Law, though void of all true devotion in the heart, and without the circumstances due to such workes. Such were the Jews of olde time. They said unto God; *Wherefore have wee fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soule, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast you finde pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickednesse: ye shall not fast, as yee do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast, that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soule, &c. Isa. 58. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* Note here (1.) the good opini-

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opinion, that this people had of their fasting, they thought so well of it, that they durst challenge God, as if hee had done them wrong, because he did not reward their service according to its worth; *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not ? &c.* (2.) Consider the fault, that God found with this service; and that is, *In the day of your fast yee finde pleasure, &c.* Where wee may see that God doth neither denie them to have fasted, nor blame them because they fasted: he onely challengeth them for doing it amisse. For whereas a fasting day should bee spent in humiliation and sorow, they on their fasting day found

found pleasure, & followed their delights: and whereas on the fasting day, men should exercise themselves in charity and good works; they fasted *for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickednesse*. It was not then the matter, that was blame-worthy in them, but their maner of performing. They did a good work, but they did not do it well: (3.) Consider wee the Censure that God passed on this service. 1. Hee saith, it will not availe them, or do them any good; *Ye shall not fast, as yee do this day, to make your voice to bee heard on high*: Which is, as if he should say, It is a speciall vertue of an holy fast, that it carieth our

Cap. 10

prayers through the clouds, and presenteth them before the Throne of grace : but this fast of yours hath no such vertue, it gaineth no audience to your prayers. 2. God denieth this fast to bee any part of his service, or any duty that he required or will accept of; *Is this the fast, that I have chosen, &c?* And so in conclusion, though they tooke great paines, & (as they thought) had highly merited Gods favour : Yet all was to no purpose, because though they performed a good work, yet they did not do it in a right maner. Thus *Isai* speaketh of a religious fast joyned with an irreligious life. *Jeremy* saith the
like

like of other holy duties in the like case. The place is *Ier. 7.8,9,10,11.* The words are; *Behold, yee trust in lying words, that can not profit. Will ye steale, murder and commit adultery, and sweare falsely, and burne incense to Baal, and walk after other gods, whom yee know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, Wee are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of Robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seene it, saith the Lord.* In these words these things are considerable, (1.) what the works were, that this people performed; and they were these, they praied

Cap. 10

and praised God, and did all such services, as were usuall in the Temple : for that is meant by this phrase, *ye come and stand before mee in this house.* (2.) What confidence they had in these performances, *They trusted in lying words, saying, Wee are delivered, &c.* (3.) What the defect of these services was; and that was that together with these good works, they joyned their owne sinnes, murder and stealing and lying for advantage. (4) What censure God passed on these devotions thus performed; and that was in these two things : 1. that they *trusted in lying words* : and 2. that by them they profaned Gods house, and made it, no better,

is to be respected.

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Cap. 10

ter, then a *den of thieves*, therein to hide their wicked deeds. This was the error of the ancient Jews in the daies of the Prophets. And the like was the error of the Scribes and Pharises in our Saviours time: and therefore hee saith of them, *ye make cleane the outside of the cup and the platter: but your inward part is full of ravening and wickednesse. Luk. II. 39.*

And the like hath beene the error of some seduced Papists in our owne time, who think they have served God well, when they have gone over *their beads*, & mumbled over a taile of *Latin prayers*, which they understand not. Nor is the error of some loose livers amōg our selves,

any thing lesse or more excusable, who detesting the superstitions of the Papists, do but change theirs for an other superstition of their own: such I meane, as measure their religion by the number of the Sermons, which they heare, as the other measured theirs by the number of prayers, which they counted on their beads or on their finger ends. These, if they heare often, & pray much, & repeate Sermons at home, they think they are highly in Gods favour; though withall they slander their neighbours, and revile their Governours, and condemne all for reprobats, that dance not after their pipe. I speake
not

not this to cast any aspersi-
on on those holy duties of
hearing and praying and re-
counting of what wee have
heard : but to detect their
follie and iniquitie , who
make these holy exercises a
cloke for their sin , and a
ground of their censorious
pride. *Isai* and *Ieremy* did
not speake against fasting
and sacrifices , when they
reproved the hypocrits of
their time, for abusing those
duties in an unholy maner.
And no more do I meane
the least word against hea-
ring and praying and repea-
ting ; when I tax the hypo-
crits of our time , for per-
verting these good works
to a bad end. I would have
all of us to honour God by

Cap. 10

these duties, and not to dishonour him by mingling them with hypocrisie and bad dealing.

Vse 2. Hence wee may learne not to content our selves with the deede done; but that when we are about an holy work, we do it also in an holy maner, and with the due circumstances belonging or required in such a work. Now, to speak more distinctly, there are three conditions required in every good work: 1. That it proceede from a cleare conscience, not defiled with knowen sin: 2. That it be with an heartie and sincere affection: and 3. that it bee done to a right end.

I. It is required in a good work,

is to be respected.

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worke that it proced, from
a good conscience free from
known sin. For to the wicked
and disobedient man, God
saith, *What hast thou to do, to
declare my statutes; or that
thou shouldest take my covenant
within thy mouth? Seeing thou
hatest instruction, and castest
my words behinde thee. Ps. 50.*

16, 17. The meaning is, as
if he should say, It pertai-
neth not to thee, to professe
religion, seeing thou doest
not practice it. And so if any
man having a polluted con-
science, take upon him to
preach Gods word, God
may say to him; *What hast
thou to do to teach my Law,*
which thou observeest not?
And if any such do come to
heare Gods word, God may

X 5 say

Cap. 10

say to him; *what hast thou to do to heare*, who art resolved not to obey? And if such a one shall come to pray or to praise God, with his people, God may say to him; *what hast thou to do, to pray unto me*, or to praise mee with thy mouth, who blasphemest me daily in thy deeds? But most of all, if any such shall come to partake of the holy Communion, God may say to him; *what hast thou to do, to eat my bread*, who doest lift up the heele against me? Or, to such a one our Lord may say as he did to the unmanerly guest in the Gospel, *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* *Matt. 22. 11.* Nor is this all: it followeth
in

is to be respected.

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Cap. 10.

in the same Text, *Take him away, and cast him into outer darknes: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* This is the case and the condition of them, who performe outward services of religion, while they have consciences within defiled with known sin. The application hereof to our selves is this; that therefore we do in this, as *David* did in the like case. He resolved, *I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I compass thyne Altar. Psal. 26. 6:* meaning, that as the Priests, before they offered sacrifice, did first wash their hands and feet: so he would wash his soule in innocencie, and cleanse his hands from in-
justice

Exod. 30
19, 21.

Cap. 10

justice and wrong; and then he would offer up his sacrifices unto God. And so must wee do: First cleanse our soules from sin, & then go to eat at Gods board, and to heare his word preached, and to offer up our prayers and praises to his name. A polluted heart cannot performe an acceptable work. This then is the first condition in a good work, that it proceede from a good heart, free from knowen sin.

I I. The second is, that it be done with upright and *heartie affection*. For God loveth a *cherefull Giver*. 2 Cor. 9.7. And so I may say, God loveth a *cherefull hearer*, and a *cherefull receiver*, and

a

a cherefull *Petitioner*, and a cherefull *doer* in all his services. But when men performed not heartie obedience; he complaineth of it, & threatneth them for their hollow-hearted service. *Forasmuch*, (saith hee) *as this people draw neare unto me with their mouth, & with their lips do honor me; but have removed their heart farre from me: Therefore, behold, I will proceede to do a marvellous work among this people: — for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall bee hid. Is. 29. 13.* And so, if any man come to heare Gods word with his eares, or to pray with his lips, or to present himselfe at Gods board,

board with his bodily presence ; and in the meanwhile send his heart another way, either not minding , or not caring , or not affecting the worke in hand : the reproofe will be as just against him ; *This man draweth neare unto mee with his mouth and his eares and his outward parts ; but his heart and his soule are farre removed away.* And where his heart is , there is his treasure : and where his treasure is , thence must hee expect his reward. Hereof this must bee the application , that as *David* said of himselfe , *My heart and my flesh rejoyce in the living God.* *Pf. 84. 2.* meaning that the joy of his heart did spread it

it selfe into the parts of this body ; so should it bee with us ; *Our heart and our mouth*, should receive the blessed Sacrament ; and *our heart and our eares* should heare the word preached & read ; and *our heart and our hand* should give almes to the poore. And so in all other the like cases. For as when * *Cesar* offered sacrifice, it was counted an ominous thing for him , that there was no heart found in the beast that was slaine : so it portendeth us no good, if our heart bee absent, when we pray and heare & praise God for his mercies.

III. It is required in a good work, that it be done for a *right end*, that is, that
God

* Plutar.
in vita
Julii Cæ-
sar. pag.
737. Val.
Max. l. 1.
cap. 6.
num. 13.

God, whose service it is, may bee honored by it. So S. Peter saith, *If any man speake, let him speake, as the Oracles of God; and, if any man minister, let him do it, as of the abilitie, which God giveth; that God in all things may bee glorified through* JESUS CHRIST. 1 Pet. 4. 11. And S. Paul, *Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever yee do; do all to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. 10. 31. Gods glory then is the right end for which all good workes must bee done. And when men neglected or missed of this end in their good workes, God upbraideth them with it; *When ye fasted and mourned,—did yee at all fast unto mee, even to mee?*

And

And when ye did eat, & when ye did drink, did yee not eat for your selves, & drinke for your selves? Zach. 7. 5, 6. Of such services as these, which are void of their right end, our Lord giveth us this caveat; Take heede that ye do not your almes before men, to bee seene of them: otherwise, ye have no reward of your father, which is in Heaven. Matt. 6. 1. And so, if wee preach to gaine applause from men, and yee heare, to make a shew of your zeale, and if any of us give almes, or do any other work, not for Gods glorie, but for our owne ends; it is a lame sacrifice, not rewardable by the Almighty. And hereof we should make this application to our selves; that

Cap. 10

that as S. Paul said of himself and his fellow-workmen in the Gospell, *Wee preach not our selves, but CHRIST JESUS the LORD, and our selves your servants for JESUS sake.* 2 Cor. 4. 5. So wee should shew the like faithfulness in all our good works, that wee seeke not our owne ends, but Gods glory in them. And if thus wee performe our holy services, it will bee said of us and of them, as it was of *Abel* and his sacrifice, *The Lord had respect to Abel and his offering.* Gen. 4. 4. The LORD will accept both of our persons and our performances; so that nothing which wee doe for Gods glory, but will prove to be also

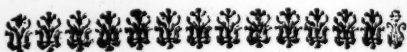
is to be respected.

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also for our own profit. God
give us the grace, that wee
may bee fruitfull in good
workes and faithfull in the
right doing of them to Gods
glory; that in all things
GOD may bee gloried
through JESUS CHRIST.

C A P.



CAP. XI.

*A man may heare amisse;
and by this error lose the
benefit of his labour.*

OUR LORD in say-
ing, *Take heed how yee
heare*, giveth us a caveat, to
beware of misse-hearing:
and that implieth, that a
man may heare amisse, and
so misse of his purpose. This
may bee further confirmed
by the parable of the Sower;
the scope whereof is, to
shew us the diversitie that
is found among hearers: &
the issue thereof is, that of
foure

four sort there recited 3. are like bad ground, which *bringeth forth no fruit to perfection.* And that proveth, that the greatest part of hearers, do heare amisse, & without profit. It may bee confirmed also by that of S. Paul, *Not the hearers of the Law are just before God: But the doers of it shall be justified. Rom. 2. 13.* For all hearers are not doers: and by that which hee saith of the preachers of the Gospel, to some sort of hearers they are *the savour of death unto death. 2 Cor. 2. 16:* and by that which our Saviour saith of some of his hearers, *Yee shall say, wee have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streetes. But he*

Cap. I I

he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity. *Luk. 13. 26, 27:* and by that which elsewhere hee saith of them, who despised his doctrine, *The word, that I have spoken, the same shall judge them at the last day. Iohn. 12. 48.* By these sayings it appeareth, that there are some, which received not profit by their hearing, no, not of the gracious words that proceeded out of our Saviours mouth: & thence I conclude, that therefore they heard amisse; for the word of God, if the fault be not in the hearer, is the *power of God to salvation. Rom. 1. 16.* But I only name these proofes, because I choose

choose rather to insist on such testimonies, as do both shew us, that there may be a fault in our hearing, and do also tell us what that fault is: that by the one wee may see how necessary it is, to bee heedfull, lest we heare amisse; and by the other how to avoid the error, that doth procure the danger.

For this purpose I observe five sorts of bad hearers condemned in Scriptures; 1. Heedlesse hearers, 2. Partiall hearers, 3. Forgetfull hearers, 4. Sensuall hearers, and 5. Fruitlesse hearers, or such as do not obey the word delivered unto them.

I. The first are *heedlesse* and negligent hearers: and they

A man may heare amisse.

they be such as heare, but do not marke or attend to that which is spoken. Such as these they were, of whom *Isai* complaineth; *Heare yee deaf, and looke ye blinde, that yee may see.*—Hee goeth on; *Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the eares, but hee heareth not.* *Isa. 42. 18, 20.* Note here (1.) the fault, with which they are charged: they are said to be *deaf and blinde.* (2) the explication or declaration, shewing, wherein this fault consisted; *Seeing many things, but thou observest not: &c.* hee meaneth that they heard and saw, but they did not mark and observe, what they heard. And for this cause he calleth them *blinde* and

and deaf; because no man is so blinde and deaf, as he that will not see and heare.

(3.) Wee may consider the meanes, by which this error may be amended: and that is in these words, *Heare and looke*; by which he meaneth that they should attend and mark what they heard.

Laie these together, and the fault will appeare to be this, that while they heard and came to learne, they did not observe what was said.

And the like to this was their fault, of whom the Apostle saith, *Yee are dull of hearing. For when for the time, ye ought to be Teachers; ye have need that one teach you againe, which be the first principles of the Oracles of God,*

Y

Heb.

Cap. 11

Heb. 5. 11. Here the Apostle chargeth them with two things: (1.) that they were *dull of bearing*. By which word hee meaneth not any naturall imperfection; for then he would rather have pitied them, then have re-proved them: but hee meaneth their *wilfull* carelesse-nesse and negligence, by reason whereof scarce could any thing bee beaten into their heads. (2.) Hee blameth them, that they profited not by the word preached, as they might and should have done. For considering the meanes that was afforded them, and the time that they enjoyed it, they might become *Teachers*, if they had beene attentive

tentive hearers ; Whereas now by reason of their negligence they had need to bee catechized in the first principles. The summe is, They were negligent in hearing : and therefore continued dullards in Christs schoole. And the like will be our fault, if when we come to heare Gods word either read or preached, we suffer our mindes to gadd abroad, by musing on our merchandizing, or our bargaining, or our husbandrie, or our businesse at home : or, which is not much better, if we give our selves over to sleepiness or deadnesse of spirit ; as I have noted some to laie their heads upon their desk, as if they meant that should

Cap. 11

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be their pillow to sleep on; and to pull their hat about their eyes, as if they meant to draw the curtaines about the bed, and bid good night to the Preacher. They that heare in this sort; out of doubt doe heare amisse, if they heare at all. And therefore when our Saviour said, Take heed how ye heare, he meant among other things, that wee should beware of negligence in our hearing.

II. The next is, of such, as bee *partiall* hearers: men, who will hearken to Gods word, while it accordeth with their lusts; but will none of it, when it crosseth their desires. And these are of two sorts: (I.) such as will

will abide no doctrine, which agreeth not with their own fantasie, and those lessons, which they have received from their owne Masters: and (2.) such, as will endure no admonitions, that strike at the sins, in which they delight.

1. They that will not abide any *doctrine*, which twharteth their received opinions. Such were the Jews, of whom wee reade, that when *Paul* spake unto them in the *Hebrew tongue*, they kept the more silence, because by this hee seemed the better affected to their nation. But when he tould them, that *G O D* bade him, *Depart from Ierusalem*; because hee would send

Cap. 11

him farre thence to the Gentiles : the Text saith , that they gave him audience unto that word ; but then they lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth : for it is not fit that he should live. Act. 22.2,22.

*And such like were the Pharises , of whom wee reade, that they joyned with the Sadduces to accuse Paul : but when Paul had once said , * Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee , the sonne of a Pharisee ; of the hope and Resurrection of the dead I am called in question : the Pharisees perceiving that Paul tooke their part against the Sadduces , whose enemies they were, then they changed their note , and , Wee finde*

* Act. 23
6,9.

finde no euill in this man, say they : *but if a spirit or an Angell haue spoken unto him, let us not fight against God.* The fault of both these sorts of men was, that they accepted and magnified the Preacher, while hee spake agreeably to their opinions; but persecuted him, when he crossed their Traditions and customes. And the like is the fault of many men at this day. Let a Preacher speake any thing in favour of their opinions, and they magnifie him, for a man of rare parts : but let him once but crosse or gainesay that which they beleeve to bee true, & he shall be debased, as unworthy to tread upon the ground. In which kind,

Cap. II

I have met with some Papists, so stiffe in what they have beene taught, that a man might as soone charme a deaf adder, as perswade them to consider of any reason. And among our brethren of the German Churches, a great number are so wedded to Luthers opinions, that they esteeme every saying of his, as an Oracle from heaven; and, as (a) *Camerarius* saith, who was well acquainted with their maners, if any man did question, what he had affirmed, they esteemed him as an enemy to God and true religion: (b) by which excessive

(a) Nonnulli in illius (Lutheri) dictis aut factis aliquid argui omnino patri nequeis, & si quis hoc facere audeat, cum

statim impietatis reum declamitando peragunt. *Camerar. in vita Phil. Melancthi. pag. 239.* (b) Iis videndum, ne præstantissimi atque summi viri bonam existimationem, tribuendo nimium, diminuere videantur. *Camer. ibid.*

tur, qua
Zanch.
cellane

excessive praises they did much diminish the honor of Gods servant, as the same Author intimateth in the same place. Thus they: and I would to God, the same fault were not too frequēt among our selves also. But *Zanchius* telleth us, that when he was at Geneva, *Viret* and *Calvin* did both preach in diverse Churches at the same houre, and upon this occasion hee asking a French-man then a constant hearer of *Calvin*, why he did not sometimes at least, go to heare so eloquent a Preacher as *Viret* was, (c) *He plainly professed,*
If S. Paul should preach at

Y 5

the

(c) Si veniret S. Paulus qui eadē horā cōcionaretur,

tur, qua & Calvinus; ego, relicto Paulo audirem Calvinum, Zanch. Epist. Nuncupat. ad Senat. Antwerp. præfixa Miscellaneis priorib. circa medium.

Cap. II

(d) Hoc
exempli
causā re-
ferre vo-
lui, ut
quōnam
tandem
rapiātur,
qui prae-
stantes
viros ni-
mum
admiran-
tur, ostē-
derem.
Ex ho-
minibus
in summa
faciunt
sibi Deos
&c Zāch.
ibid.

(e) Ter-
tull. Apo-
log. ca. 6.
num, 55.
pag 30.

the same houre, that Calvin doth, I would leave Paul to heare Calvin. By which example hee (d) meant to shew with what madnesse they are caried, who admire worthy men, more then is fit for men: of men they make them Gods, and equall them with CHRIST himselfe. And my selfe have knowne some Zelots, who did even gape after the Preachers words, while hee was upon a welcome theame: but when once hee did but mention the reverent gesture of kneeling at Communion, became as blank, as if they had seene a ghost. Of all these sorts of men I may speake in a like maner, as (e) Tertullian did of the
hea.

heathenish Romans, who forbade the making of any new God, but such as the Senat did approve: [*Apud vos de humano arbitratu divinitas pensitatur;*] Among you, saith he, Gods are esteemed, as men please: and [*Nisi homini Deus placuerit, Deus non erit,*] If God do not please men, he must bee no God at all. And so I may say of these men, Among the the truth of God is reckoned by the opinion of men: if it be not approved by such a man, as they follow, it shall bee no truth at all.

This partiality towards Gods servants, is a great derogation to Gods glory: against which our Saviour giveth this caveat, *Call no man*

Cap. 11

*man father upon earth ; for one is your father , which is in heaven. Nor bee yee called masters ; for one is your master, even CHRIST. Matt. 23. 9, 10. He meaneth, that though we may and must reverence our Teachers ; and, (as the Apostle speaketh) esteeme them very highly in love for their works sake : 1 Thess. 5. 13. Yet wee may not make them Authors or Lords of our faith, and therefore believe every thing to be true, because they speake it. For this were not to magnifie them, as worthy men, but to deifie them, as if they were supernall Gods. And therefore the Apostle reproveth the *Corinthians*, as carnall men, because they said,*

said, *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas. For who is Paul, (saith hee) and who is Apollos, but ministers, by whom ye have beleev- ed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I Cor. 3. 4, 5. And hereupon he inferreth, Let no man glory in men : for all things are yours. ver. 21. And therefore, whosoever is best and greatest in the Church, though he were as good, as S. Paul, yet we must esteeme him but as Gods Minister, who is then to bee heard, when hee speaketh, what God hath put into his mouth. Herein the Bereans are commended to us, as a paterne for our practice. They, after Paul had preached unto them, searched the*
Scri-

Scriptures, that they might see whether those things were so. *Act. 17. 11.* And so should we do; If the best man alive should commend unto us his opinions, we should examine them, before we accept them, and search the *Scriptures*, to consider whether that, which he speaketh, bee agreeable to the Texts, which he alledgeth: that so God alone may bee the master of our faith.

And this wee shall the sooner do, if wee be so disposed, as these *Bereans* were, that is, men of *noble* and free spirits, not servilly addicted to any without reason. *Salvianus*, an ancient and learned writer doth ascribe the cause of this partiall following

*Avarit. e
hodie re
factionib
deus ad
ceteri; q
tium quod
eos essent
in pref. v*

ing of men, to weaknesse of judgement, & want of consideration. (a) *So weak, saith he) are mens judgements now a dayes, that they which read the works of other men, do not so much consider, what it is which they reade, as whose it is: nor do they weigh so much the force of the speech, as the autoritie of the speaker.* But *Ludovicus Vives*, a late learned men, laieth the fault of this error upon the factious minds of men, who partially addict themselves to one side. (b) *Now a dayes, (saith he*

(a) Tam imbecilla sunt iudicia huius temporis, ac pene, tã nulla; ut hi qui legunt, non tam considerent quid legant, quam cuius legant: nec tam dictoris vim atq; virtutem, quam dictatoris cogitent dignitatem Salvan.

contra

Avaric. epist. ad Salonium pag. 9.

(b) Videmus hodie rem potius affectibus geri, sicut in partibus & factionibus Civitatum, quam ratione & iudicio. Sic Judæus adhæret mordicus suæ sectæ: sic Saracenus & ceteri; quoniam eas à parentibus acceperunt. Nec excutitur quò mens & ratio, si aptè in consilium adhiberentur, eos essent tandem perducitur. Ludov. Vives de Verit. Fidei in præf. vide & pag. 357.

A man may heare amisse.

he) the businesse of religion is managed by passion, rather then by reason, as it usually happeneth in the faction and siding of Cities. The Iew adhereth to his sect, and so doth the Saracen and others to theirs, because they have beene so bred and taught by their parents: nor do they consider, whither reason and judgement would conduct them, if they were admitted for counsellors, to advise with. We may well joyne both these causes together, and say that faction and siding in matters of religion doth so possesse mens minds, that they give not themselves leave, to use reason and judgement, for discerning of the truth. For, as *Tullie* observed long agoe, the

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potera
valer
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corumque
amur. P

the (c) *autority of the Teacher* doth many times hinder the profiting of his Scholars. For while they take all for good, which he saith, [*desinunt adhibere iudicium suum,*] they forbear to use their owne judgment. Nor, saith he, was it a commendable practice in the Pythagorians, who being demanded a reason of their sayings, alledged the autority of their Master; and thought it a reason good enough, if they could say, [*Ipse dixit,*] Our master said so. [*Tantum opinio præjudicata poterat, ut etiam sine ratione valeret autoritas,*] Such was their prejudicat opinion of their masters

Cap. 11
(c) Obeſt
plerūque
iis qui
discere
volunt,
autoritas
eorū, qui
se docere
profiten-
tur. desi-
nūt enim
suum ju-
diciū ad-
hibere: id
habent
datum,
quod ab
eo, quem
probant,
iudicatū
vident.
Cicer. de
nat. Deo-
rū, paulo
post prin-
cipium,
pag. 197.
lin. 4 and
multas
falsas &
malas
opinio-
nes, bene
volentia
erga di-
centes

eorumque apud nos autoritate inducti in errorem, ampleximur. Plutarch. de Auditione pag. 41.

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Masters worth, that with them his autoritie was sufficient without reaso. Thus wise men in all ages have thought the unprofitable scholars, who have *factiously* and partially addicted themselves to some Masters of their own liking: & therefore I may upō good ground say, that such are bad hearers, or such as heare Gods word amisse. Thus much for the first sort of *partiall* hearers.

2. The second sort are they, who will heare with all readinesse and attention, till the Preacher touch upon their owne sore; but their darling sin, is a *noli me tangere*, touch that and ye touch the *aple of their eie*. Such a one was *Herod*, who heare

John

John Baptist *gladly*, & *when he heard him*, *did many things* according to his direction. But when he tould the King, It is not lawfull for thee to have thy brothers wife; then insteede of hearing him, and following his directions, he first sent him to the prison, and then to the block. *Mar. 6. 17, 18, 20, &c.* And as bad or worse were they, who said to the Seers, *See not*; and to the Prophets, *Prophecie not unto us right things: speake unto us smooth things, Prophecie deceits.* *Isa. 30. 10.* Where we may not so construe the Text, as if this people did utter those expresse words: they were not so shamelesse, or so devoid of reason. But it is the
maner

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maner of Scriptures, to put into mens mouths those words which are agreeable to their thoughts: according to which rule, when the Prophet saith, *they said Prophecy not right things, &c;* we must understand him to meane, that such were their thoughts, as might very fitly bee expressed by these words, or that they did in effect as good as say so: for either they maligned and opposed the Prophets, when they told them of their sins; or else they withdrew their maintenance and favours from them: but if any would sing a Nightingalls song, and speak that which either might countenance, or did not controll their ill-dealings,

dealings, hee was the man
that carried away all the fa-
vour. And like to these were
those of whom *Micah* spea-
keth; *If a man* (saith hee)
walking in the spirit and false-
hood, do lie, saying, I will pro-
phesy to thee of strong drink,
he shall even bee the Prophet of
this people. *Micah 2. 11.* Hee
meaneth that such a Teacher
would be the onely man of
account with them; they
would even put him into
their bosom. Thus it hath
beene in old time, and the
like may be observed to bee
usuall among us at this day.
For there is no man, who
is resolved to go on in a sin;
but he is grieved, when hee
heareth it gainesaid by the
Preacher: nor is there any
man

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man lightly, but will bee glad to heare that sin gently handled, wherewith himselfe is delighted. Of *Ahab* wee read that hee *hated Micah*, because he *never prophesied good, but evill* unto him: that is, hee preached that, which pleased him not. And so wee see it to happen still: wicked men will hate the Preacher, who telleth them the truth.

This hatred against the true Prophets, as it is seene in all sorts of carnall men; so more especially in these two sorts of sinners, (1.) in them who bee in higher place, & (2.) in them who, contribute to the Preachers maintenance: for the one sort think themselves privileged

ledged from reproof by their greatnesse above him; and the other sort, by their well-deservings towards him. And therefore, as the first do over-aw him by their power, that for feare of displeasure hee may holde his peace: so the second sort do over-aw him by their purse, that for feare of losse he may forbear them. In either kindes we have an example in the Scriptures: the former in *Ieroboam* the King of *Israel*, and the later in *Balak* the King of *Moab*.

I. The first is in *Ieroboam*: of him and his Courtiers wee read, that when *Amos* preached against them for their idolatrie; *Amaziak* the priest of *Bethel*, said unto *Amos*;

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O thou Seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Iudah, and there eat bread, and prophecy there. But Prophecy not any more at Bethel: for it is the Kings Chappell, and it is the King Court. Amos 7.12. Note heere (1.) what *Amaziah* permitteth him to do; and that is, to *prophecy in Iudah*, & there to speake his mind, if he pleased. (2.) What hee forbiddeth him to do; and that is, he may not preach *any more at Bethel* in that maner: and (3.) why hee might not preach in Bethel in this rough maner; and that is, because it was *the Kings Chappell, and the Kings Court*. As if hee should say, that elsewhere, hee might take leave, and be welcome, but

but the King and his Courtiers would not endure so much boldnesse. And just so is it now a dayes among us. We may tell an Artificer, or a Labourer, or an husbandman, or a servant, or any such kinde of man; we may tell them of their faults freely, and without danger: but if wee touch a Nobleman, or a Gentleman, or an Alderman, or a Great moneyed man, we do it at our perill and shall bee sure to raise hornets about our eares. Thus worldly men, if they bee in higher place, think themselves priviledged from reproof.

2. The second example is in *Balak* the King of *Moab*. Of him we read that he sent

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for

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for *Balaam* to curse the people of God. But *Balaam* refused to curse, because God did forbid and restrain him: & hereupou the Text saith, that *Balaks* anger was kindled against *Balaam*, and he smote his hands together and said; *I called thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee thou to thy place. I thought to promote thee to great honor, but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour. Num. 24. 10, 11.* Note here, (1.) what *Balak* intended for *Balaam*, if hee would curse where he bade him: & that was great ferment; *I thought to promote thee to great honour.* (2.) Why he withdrew his hand, and sent

sent him away emptie : and
that was because he did that,
which G O D had charged
him to do, and did not what
Balak required of him. And
therefore saith he , *God hath*
kept thee from honour. And
just so is it now a dayes.
They that give benevolence
to the Preacher , looke that
he should curse, where they
would have him curse, and
bless where they would
have him bless , or which
is all one, praise and defend
that which they would have
praised , and disgrace and
condemne those and that
which they cannot abide :
and if at any time hee fall
upon that sin, which pleaseth
them, then as *David* said of
Absalom, *Deale gently with*

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the young man for my sake.

2 Sam. 18. 5 : so they expect that the Preacher should deale gently with that sin for their sake. All these men are partiall hearers, who will heare nothing with submission, but what pleaseth themselves : men, who come not to learne of the Preacher, what they should do, but to teach the Preacher, what he shall speak. Which is all one, as if the Scholar should tell his master, what lessons he should teach him. Thus some for their greatness, & others for their bountie exempt themselves from just reproofe, which is one task that the Preacher hath to performe in Gods name. These then are all of them
partiall

partiall hearers, and therefore bad hearers, because they refuse to learne what God doth cōmand the Preacher to teach them. And consequently, when our Saviour said, *Take heede how ye heare*, hee meant among other things, that we should beware of *partiality* in our hearing; and that wee should submit to every word of God, how crosse soever it bee either to our opinions, or to our practice.

III. The third sort are *forgetfull* hearers; such as through negligence and carelesse-ness, let slip out of their memories, what they have learned or heard, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, who forgate his owne dreame. For

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God had sent him a dreame to instruct him in things belonging to his state & Kingdome; but before the morning came, he had forgotten, what his dreame was. *Dan.* 2. 5, 8. And so it is with these men. God teacheth them by his word, the mysteries of his Kingdom, & the meanes of their salvation, and they immediatly forget, what was said, as if they had been in a dreame all the while. Thus farre they are like *Nebuchadnezzar*; but unlike him in this, that he used all diligence to finde out the dreame, but these men heare and forget, and never think of it after. *S. Iames* saith of fruitlesse hearers, that they are like to a man, who beboldeth
his

A man may heare amisse.

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his naturall face in a glasse, and goeth his way, and straight way forgetteth what maner of man he was. Iam. 1. 23, 24. He meaneth, that as such a man forgetteth, what he saw, so these men forget what they heare. For defect in practice, and neglect of remembrance usually go together. For if any man have no care to do Gods will, hee will have no mind to remember his word: and if any man do forget the word, he hath left himselfe no meanes to performe it. And therefore in Scripture phrase to *forget God*, and his commandements, is as much as to neglect both him and them: as, when *David* saith, *My Zele hath consumed me, because mine enemies have*

Psal. 119.
139.

Z 4 for-

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forgotten thy words; he meaneth that they did not think on them, much lesse did they keepe and performe them. And many such wee have now a dayes, even among them, who professe religion. They go from the Church to their houses, and from Sermon to dinner, and from hearing of Gods word to talking of the things of the world; but never call to mind what they have heard, nor consider what use it may serve them for. Such men do quickly forget all, and practice nothing. Our lesson in this case is delivered us by the Apostle, where he saith, *We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things, which wee have heard, lest at*
any

any time wee should let them
flipp. Heb. 2.1. The word is,
Μὴ ποτε παρορῶμεν, that is, as
Beza translateth it, *ne quando*
perfluamus, that wee do not
at any time runne out. In
which speech the Apostle
compareth forgetfull hea-
rers to leaking vessels: be-
cause as those vessels let out
by the chincks, what they
received by the mouth; so
these hearers let out at one
eare, what they received at
the other. And because they
keepe not, what they heare,
they lose the profit of their
hearing; like men, who eate,
and cast up what they have
eaten, without receiving
nourishment by it. These
then are a third sort of bad
hearers: & therefore when

our Lord said, *Take heed how ye heare*, he meant we should bee ware, that wee bee not carelesse and forgetfull hearers.

IIII. A fourth sort of bad hearers are wanton or *sensuall* hearers; such as desire to have their eares tickled with fine phrases, rather then their soules setled with holesome doctrine. Such hearers were the Athenians, of whom it is said *Act. 17. 21.* that *they spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to heare some newes.* And some such like were they, of whom God speaketh to the Prophet, *Sonne of man, the children of thy people.—speake one to another—saying, Come, I pray you*

you, and heare what is the word
that commeth forth from the
LORD. And they come to
thee, as the people cometh, &c.
And lo, thou art unto them as
a very lovely song of one that
hath a pleasant voice and can
play well on an instrument:
For they heare thy words, but
they do them not. Ezek. 33. 30,
31, 32. Where wee may
note, that though this peo-
ple shewed great zeale in
flocking to the Prophets
Sermons; Yet all that they
cared for was to please
themselves in his words:
not unlike them, who heare
a piper, or a fidler, because
they delight in the musick.
This fault was in (a) S. Aug.
before his conversion: he
went to hear S. Ambrose: not
for

(a) Aug.
confess.
l. 5. c. 13.
& 14. pag.
43.

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(b) Quam
fratribus
quibus
dam de
rebus ne-
cessariis
ac spiri-
tualibus
disputa-
ret, eosq;
videret
lethæo
quodam
sopore
demergi;
otiosam
repente
fabulam
introduc-
it, &c.
Cassian.
de Instit.
li 5. c. 31.
See Eras.
Chiliad.
p. 325. de
Afini
umbra,

for any care of his doctrine, but for love to his eloquence and rhetorike. And such also was the fault of those Monks of whom (b) *Cassian* reporteth, that while the Abbot was discoursing about points of faith and religion, fell into *a dead sleepe*; but when the old father meaning to correct their drowfines, began to tell them a merie tale of some idle fiction, then they rubbed their eies, and lifted up their eares; and heard him with great attention. And not much unlike is the fault of many in our daies. For some like no Sermons, but such as are stuffed with fine words and abound with wittie turnings, which make musick to the eares;
like

like the gallants of our time, who like no clothes, but those which are cut and jagged, and according to the new fashion. Others, if they heare a Preacher, that hath both eloquence and good matter; they single out the rhetorick for their use, and passe over the matter, as unworthy of their noting. These kind of hearers * *Plutarch* compareth to women, who gather out of their gardens such flowers, as may make a nosegay, or adorne the windows of their house: and I may not unfitly compare them to some Gentlemen among us, who with great cost and care plant Tulips and strange flowers, which delight the eie with varie.

*Plutarch.
de audit.
p. 41.*

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varietie of colours , but respect not either pott herbs, that may serve for meate, or physicall flowers , that are fit for medicine. But good hearers saith *Plutarch*, are more like to *Bees*. For as they sit upon thyme and such other herbs , whence they may gather most honey , though they be bitter and unpleasant to the taste : so good hearers delight in such Teachers , from whom they may gather best caveats against sinne, and best rules, for a godly life ; and out of every Sermon they will pick that, which is most for their soules health, though it have some bitternesse and unpleasant relish with it. If men then, in hearing of Sermons, respect

respect the tickling of the eare with fine words, rather then the stablishing of the soule with wholesome doctrine; these are a sort of bad hearers. And therefore, when our Saviour said, *Take heede how ye heare*; he meant, that among other faults in our hearing; we should beware of *itching* eares, which love vain delight more then solid doctrine.

V. The fifth and last sort of bad hearers are those that bee *fruitlesse*, which heare, but do not; like the fruitlesse figge tree, which made a faire shew by its greene leaves, but had no fruit, that might refresh nature. And these hearers are of two sorts, proud & profane men.

I. *Proud*

I. *Proud men* I call such, who when they know what God commandeth, and are in conscience convinced of the truth; yet will not submit to Gods Law, but break through all without feare. Such were the Iewes, of whom *Jeremy* writeth, that when hee had told them of their idolatrie, with Gods expresse command to the contrary, they answered, *As for the word, which thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee: but wee will doe whatsoever goeth out of our owne mouth, &c. Jer. 44. 16.* And not much unlike unto these, though somewhat more shamefast then they, are those other mentioned

oned by the same Prophet. *Jeremie* had told them from God, that they should not goe into Egypt, *Chap. 42.* and then it followeth, *Chap. 43.* Then spake *Azariah* and *Iohanan*, and all the proud men, saying to *Jeremiah*, *Thou speakest falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Goe not into Egypt, to sojourne there. But Baruch the sonne of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, &c.* So—they obeyed not the voice of the Lord, to dwell in the land of *Iudah*, *Ier. 43. 2, 3, 4.* In these passages of the Prophet, note, (1.) the difference betweene these two sorts of men: the first are peremptory and plaine, *We will*

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
will not hearken, say they; but the latter maketh an excuse, though an unjust one, *Thou speakest falsely*, say they to the Prophet: and, *The Lord hath not sent thee*, &c. (2.) Consider their agreement in the like sinne, they both refused to hearken, and obey Gods word. (3.) See the censure, that God passeth on them, which is that they are *proud men*. For so it is expressely said of the more manerly sort, and therefore must necessarily be meant of the more peremptory: if he bee a *proud man*, that obeyeth not, because he saith the Lord had not said so; hee is much more *proud*, that saith, I will not hearken to the word of the Lord. And

proud

proud men the Prophet calleth thē, because they durst withstand Gods word, when it is evidently declared unto them. And so in our dayes, wee have some that are peremptory, and say they will do it the rather, because the Preacher prateth so much against them. Others are more manerly in making of excuses; sometimes they alledge danger, and sometimes their care for wife and children, and sometimes occurrences of necessary businesses, and such other reasons, like the guests in the Gospel, who thought themselves excused because they had *married a wife*, and *bought a yoke of oxen*, and purchased a piece of Land. But of all
it

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* Sub:
stantive
positum
significat
peccata,
quæ
quis scie
ens ac
volens
perpetrat
Schindl.
Pentagl.
in verbo
777

it is true, that they may rightly be called proud men, if they presume to disobey when Gods will is made manifest to their consciences. And therefore it is that *David* calleth the finnes of such men, *  that is, word for word, Prides or proud finnes, which for perspicuity sake, is rendred in our Bibles, *presumptuous sins*, and they in the Text are opposed to *secret finnes*, or sins of ignorance and inadvertencie. *Who can understand his errors?* saith *David*, *cleanse thou mee from secret faults. Keepe back thy servant also from presumptuous finnes; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent*

cent from the great transgression, *Psal. 19. 12, 13.* By this appeareth that some sort of fruitlesse hearers, are *proud men*, and out of their pride disobey the knowen will of God.

2. The second sort are *prophane men*: and so in this place I call them, who heare Gods word out of custome, but minde not, nor care not what the Preacher saith. Hee may talk what he pleaseth, but as it is said of *Gallio* in another case, so it is true of these men, they *care for none of these things*. These hearers are herein like the unthankfull guests, who when they were invited, *made light of it, and went away* about their other occasions,

Cap. I I

sions, *Matth. 22. 5.* Nor are they much unlike to those profane men of *Ephraim* and *Manasses*, who when *Hezekiah* sent messengers to invite them to Ierusalem, that there they might keep the *Passover* according to the Law, and serve God according to his will ; they *mocked the messengers and laughed them to scorne. 2. Chr. 30. 10.* And so, if any make light of the word preached, and scorne or despise Gods messengers, who shew them the waies of salvation ; such I call *profane* men, who make no reckoning of Religion. And of these and all others who disobey the Gospel, and do not bring forth fruits of obedience, I say they

they bee bad and ungodly hearers. For if *any man heare my words* (saith our Saviour) *and doth them not, he is like a man, who without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the streame did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruine of that house was great.* Luk, 6. 48, 49. And therefore I may conclude of these, as I did of the rest; when our Lord said, *Take heed how yee heare;* he meant that among other vices in hearers, wee should take heed of *fruitlesse* hearing, when men heare and doe not.

Thus I have gone through the severall sorts of bad hearers. I now desire every Christian, that shall vouchsafe

safe to reade these lines, that after his reading, hee will examine himselfe by these notes. I suppose hee hath beene an hearer of Gods word for some space of time; and doth still continue in that practice for the salvation of his soule. And pittie it were, that hee should lose all that labour in hearing, & the Preacher his labor in instructing of him in Gods will: and much more pitie, that God should lose his labour in providing him so much good meanes of grace without use. And sure the labour is all lost, which is bestowed upon such as bee bad hearers, of whom hitherto I have spoken. Let every Christian then in the
feare

feare of God, examine his owne heart, whether hee have beene either a negligent, or a partiall, or a sensuall, or a forgetfull, or an unfruitfull Hearer: and if he finde himselfe guilty, let him now at least amend his error, and make better use of the meanes of grace. For direction wherein I have in this place no more to say, but that hee would remember the words of the Text, *Take heed how yee heare.*

A a CAP.



CAP. XII.

Preparative duties, to be observed for right hearing.

WHen our Lord saith, *Take heede how yee heare*, he doth not onely signifye that there is danger in hearing amisse; but also doth implie, that by *heedfulnessse* we may avoid the danger, and so heare, that wee may reape benefit by it. And that is the point, which after the danger discovered, commeth now to be spoken of. For better proceeding wherein, wee are in the first place

place to consider, that this heedfulness includeth two things; Consideration, and Execution. *Consideration* searcheth out what be the things, that are available for the purpose: and *Execution* putteth them in practice, when once they are found to be good. The former of these two is included in the meaning of the word: for so much this word *βλέπετε* See, looke, or take heed, doth naturally import. And the later of them is implied in the intention of the speaker. For searching after available meanes is vaine without making use of them after they are found. And therefore, when our Lord said, *Take heed how yee heare*, hee

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meant that wee should consider how wee may heare with profit, that wee lose not the fruit of our labour; and that what rules we find to be good for the purpose, we make use of them accordingly, that our speculation may be seconded by our practice. For our better direction wherein, we are to consider of foure sorts of duties necessary for this purpose. The first are duties going before our hearing; the second are duties or rules to be observed in the time of our hearing; the third are such as are to be practiced after the end of our hearing; & the last are common & do diffuse themselves through all these differēces of time. I begin

gin with the first of these.

I. First then, before we come to heare, there are certaine *preparative* duties, that may fit and prepare us for the work. For Gods word is like *seede* sowed by the Preacher; and the Hearers are like the ground, in which this seed is sowed, as our Saviour hath taught us in the parable of the Sower, immediatly preceding this caveat of heed-taking how we heare. Now no wise man will sow his seed till he have manured his ground. He will first plough & dung, and gather out the stones & the rubbish, and then cast in his seed with hope of a plentiful harvest: and so we, before the seed of Gods

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word bee sown in our hearts, we must take care, that they bee prepared and made fit soile to receive such seed in. This is meant by that of *Ieremie*, *Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thornes. Ieremie 4. 3.* He meaneth, that as no man doth sow his seed before he have ploughed the ground & pulled up the weeds and thornes; for else all, both labour and seed would bee lost, so every wise servant of God, should prepare his heart before the seeds of grace and good instructions be sown in it. For else, if the heart of a man bee hard and without feeling, like the *high way side*, that is hardened by often treading upon

on

on it; it will not open or un-
close it selfe to receive the
seed. And if it be filled with
the cares of the world & the
love of riches and pleasures,
like the *thornie* ground, that
is overspread with rubbish;
though it receive the seed,
yet it choketh it in the sprin-
ging. It is then a point of
necessary observation; that
if we will heare with profit,
we prepare our hearts afore-
hand, that like good ground
they may bring forth fruit
to perfection. Now for the
ploughing up of the heart,
and preparing of it for the
seed, diverse duties are first
to be performed, which for
that cause I call *preparative*
duties: and those are, as
followeth.

1. The first *preparative* dutie is, that wee put off worldly businesſes, and emptie our ſoules of earthly thoughts, which either might take up our time due to this worke, or distract our mindes in the performance of it. For looke how long the minde roveh, and ſo much of the good ſeed is ſpilt, as is ſowen in that time: and if beſides, occaſions of the world do keep us from hearing, or hinder us in preparing for it; what in this caſe is beſtowed on the world, is ſtollen from God and our owne ſoules. And therefore in the Decalogue, where God commanded the Jews to ſanctifie the ſeventh day, as a day of reſt for
Gods

Gods service, hee telleth them that they had six daies allowed thē to do their own works in; but the seventh was a Sabbath of rest, in which being freed from the world, they should bee at leasure for God. For better keeping of which day, *Moses* commanded them, that the day before the Sabbath, they should (a) *bake, what they had to bake*; and *seeth, what they had to seeth*; that so they might have no businesse of their own to do, when they were to keepe Gods holy day. And from hence it was that the Jews called the sixth day of the week, (b) *the preparation of the Sabbath*. Some have thought, that this was a peculiar title of

Aa 5 the

(a) Exod.
16. 23.

(b) Matt.
27. 62. &
Luk. 23.
54.

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(c) Joh.
19.31.

the day going before the Pasſeover: and ſure there is reaſon to think, that it was in an eſpeciall maner uſed before that day, becauſe as that (c) Sabbath day was an high day; ſo this preparation day ſhould be obſerved with more ſolemnitie and care, that it might uſher in that great day, with the more honour. But yet I take it, every Sabbath day had his preparation day going before, according to that rule of *Moses* mentioned before. And ſo (d) learned men

(d) Paraſceve
Græca
vox eſt,
Latinè

gene-
dicas præparationem. Eo nomine Judæi--vocabant ſextam Sabbathi, ſeu ſextam Hebdomadæ diem, --- eò quòd illo die pararent neceſſaria omnia ad vivendum die ſubſequenti, ne qua re opium Sabbathi violare cogerentur. Brugent. in Matr. 27. 62 Vox Paraſceve, qua Romani hanc ſolam feriam ſextam compellant, communis eſt omnibus totius anni feriis ſexæis. -- Paraſceve verò præparatio interpretatur, quo nomine Judæi, qui inter Græcos converſabantur, ſextam Sabbathi, quæ nunc à nobis ſexta feria nominatur, appellabant, &c. Antiq. Liturg. tom. 2. de feria ſexta, pag. 915. Vide Ga. æu in Caſſian. Inſtit. lib. 5. cap. 24 pag. 12.

generally do affirm. Answerably whereunto, and (as I take it) in imitation thereof the Christian Church hath beene accustomed to keepe Saterday half holy day, that in the afternoone they might ridd by-busineses out of the way, and by the evening service might prepare their mindes for the Lords day then ensuing. Which custome and usage of Gods people, as I will not presse it upon any mans conscience, as a necessary dutie; so every man will grant mee, that Gods people, as well Christian as Jewish, have thought a time of preparation most fit for the well observing of Gods holy day. And upon this ground I may be bolde to

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to advise every good Christian, that before the exercises of the LORDS day, he will take care to lay aside worldly occasions, and to cleare his minde from the thought of them: that so he may have nothing to do with the world, while hee is to converse with God, nor bee distracted with earthly thoughts, when hee is to bee busied about heavenly things. In regard whereof I cannot but blame their loosenesse, who follow the businesse of their trade in the morning of the Lords day; or spend other parts thereof in talking with their servants about the disposing of the next weeks work, as if they meant to
make

make the Lords day a *preparation* day for the week following. By which meanes, it falleth out not seldome, that such people come tardy to Church, and heare without attention, when they are come, and go away without profit when all is done. I like not their rigour who allow no *word* nor *thought* on a Sabbath day, but such as is spirituall: nor can I approve their loosenes, who take so much libertie for themselves, as hindereth any substantiall dutie of Gods service. More I say not at this time, grant mee but thus much, and then ye will not denie, but so much preparation is necessary, as may make us fit for the duties of Gods

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Gods service, and may make the exercises of an holy day profitable for our soules.

II. A second *preparative* duty for right hearing, is that wee refresh the body with seasonable & moderat comforts: that the senses & spirits being refreshed, the minde may bee made more chearefull in Gods service. For, our soules work, as our bodies are fitted for them: and the reason is, because the senses of the body are the servants of the soule, & the spirits are the instrumēt by which it worketh. Now if a master-workman doe want servants to assist him, he will do but a little work: and if hee want tooles, or have none but blunt ones, he

he can do no work, or none to any pupose. And so if the bodily senses bee decaied, and the spirits wasted; the minde cannot be free or forward in good duties. And consequently, if we desire, that our soules may be fresh & lively in hearing or praying or praising God, it will be necessary, that the body bee kept in vigour by its usuall refreshings. And these refreshings are two especially, *moderat diet* and *seasonable sleepe*. In these I require two things, 1. that there bee a competent use of them allowed, to the body; and 2. that this use be moderat and seasonable. And this the Apostle meant, when hee said, *Make*

not

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(a) Cas-
sian Inst.
1 b. 5 c. 8.
pag. 116.

not provision for the flesh, to
fulfill the lusts thereof. Rom.
13. 14. for by these words,
(a) saith a good writer¹ [*non
curam ejus omnimodis interdi-
xit, sed ut in desideriis fieret de-
negavit.*] He did not forbid
all care, but denied the ful-
filling, of its lusts: [*Volup-
tuousam ademit diligentiam car-
nis, gubernationem vite ne-
cessariam non exclusit,*] hee
tooke away the sensuall care
of the flesh, but not the right
ordering of it according to
the course of nature.

1. It is necessary, that
there bee allowed a reason-
able use of them, that the
senses may bee lively and
active for their work. For
wee read of the Egyptian
yong man, that by long fa-
sting

before hearing.

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sting hee was ready to die,
but when he *had eaten* some
food, then saith the Text,
his spirit came againe to him.

1 Sam. 30. 12. And so *Iona-*
thans eies were enlightened by
eating a little honey in his
hunger. *1 Sam. 14. 27.* And
again, if the people had
beene suffered to *eate of the*
spoile of their enemies, there
had beene a *farre greater*
slaughter among the Philis-
tines. ver. 30. And so in this
case, sleepe and food are
necessary refreshings, that
wee may bee chearefull in
Gods service. And the rea-
son is cleare in experience.
For we see that the famished
body is unfit for worke, and
the hungrie belly thinketh
more of eating & drinking,
then

(b) Effi-
caciùs
semper
corde
concupi-
tur, quic-
quid sen-
sum & ab-
sque ni-
mio la-
bor: cor-
poris in-
timatur.
Cassian.
Collat. 14
cap. 19.
pag. 651.

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(c) Vatable in
Jud. 4. 21.

then of praying or learning Gods word: and the man that is weary with long labour, had rather sleepe, then meditat or heare. It is said of *Sisera*, that hee was fast a sleepe and weary; and the meaning is, say the Learned (c) *pressus sopore præ lassitudine*, that by reason of his weariness he fell into a dead sleepe. The conclusion is, some refreshing is necessary for the body, that it may be serviceable for the soule. And this is the first thing that I say.

2. The second is, that this refreshing must be *seasonable and moderat*. For as emptines breedeth faintnesse, so fulnesse is a burden: and both of them disable the soule in
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work
sleepe

her functions. For as the Egyptian was not able to tell his tale, when hee wanted meat : so *Nabal* was not fit for good counsell, when he was filled with wine and good cheare. 1. *Sam.* 25. 36, 37. And for this cause our LORD giveth us warning, *Take heede to your selves, that your hearts be not overcharged with surfetting and drunkennesse and cares of this life; and so that day come upon you unawares. Luk. 21. 34.* This sheweth that meat & drink, if they be immoderat, are a burden to the soule. Likewise sleepe, if it bee seasonable, refresheth nature and maketh men fit for their worke : but unseasonable sleepe is an hinderance to good

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good imployments ; which made *Solomon* to say, that if a man *love sleepe he will come to poverty. Pro. 20. 13 & 6. 11.* And so it is in the spirituall state of mens soules. Those that give themselves to sleepe, when they should watch and work in Gods service, will doubtlesse come to great poverty in Gods graces. And no marvell. For if men sleepe when they should come to Church, they deprive themselves of some part of Divine service: and if they sleepe when they are come, they deprive themselves of all the fruit, that they should reape by it, and consequently they lose the helps & meanes, which God hath appointed for the enriching

enriching of their soules with divine graces. The conclusion is; Comforts of nature, in meat and sleepe, are necessary for attentive hearing, so they bee moderate and seasonable.

But in both these refreshings men do oftentimes offend: and hee that would have good of these comforts, must bee carefull to avoid those errours, which be these.

I. Men offend in eating and drinking, seldome in defect, but many times by excesse. It was sometimes a fault among the Primitive Christians (when men in their zeale did take the kingdome of heaven by violence) that they fasted so long

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long till they fainted : and therefore were reprov'd by the Ancient Fathers, for their austerity and rigour. But our times are not greatly guilty of that fault. Our sinne is, that by too full feeding wee become unfit for holy duties. For *whoredome and wine and new wine take away the heart*, as the Prophet speaketh. *Hos. 4. 11.* And *surfeiting, and drunkennesse, and cares of the world, do overcharge the heart*, that it cannot keep watch against the great day ; as our Saviour saith. *Luke 21. 34.* The meaning of which speeches is, that by eating and drinking, and caring for the world excessively or overmuch, the soule of man is pressed downe,

downe, and laid groveling upon the earth; so that it is unfit for any heavenly thoughts. And this we find to bee true by dayly experience. For if we feed to the full on the Lords day at dinner, wee are the worse disposed to heare, or pray, or serve God any way in the afternoone. And therefore, if we desire to profit by our hearing, we must beware of full feeding: especially, we must take heed, that a full stomacke doe not cause a drowisie head.

2. In sleeping men offend both wayes, both by defect, and excesse.

(1.) By *defect*: and so they offend, who on the Saturday night do continue
so

Preparative duties

so long at their worke,
that they are sleepe the
next day, when they should
serve God in good duties.
For this wee may be well as-
sured of, that they who
work when they should
sleepe, will sleep when they
ought to work : because na-
ture, if it be defrauded of its
ordinary rest, will still bee
seeking of a supply of that
which is wanting. And
therefore those, that would
be cheerefull in holy exerci-
ses on the Lords day, must
give themselves sufficient
rest the foregoing day. Yea
and if I might advise, they
should allow somewhat
more then ordinary at that
time; because it is harder
to forbear sleepe in the
Church

before hearing.

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Church, where wee sit still without moving, then it will bee in our shops, or in places abroad, where we are stirring and moving about our occasions, and intent upon our Trades and businesse.

(2). Wee offend herein by *excesse* also. So they do, who slugge it so long in their beds on the Service-day, as that some part of Gods service is past, before they are ready to come. This fault deserveth reproofe in two respects. 1. Because it argueth a great coldnesse in holy duties, and a dead spirit to God-ward. For what wee do willingly and with a cheerefull minde, that wee do speedily, and

B b

with-

without lingring or delay. Wee reade of *Shechem Hamors* sonne, when hee had a grant of *Dinah Jacobs* daughter to be his wife, upon condition that hee and his people would bee circumcised; that he *deferred not to doe the thing, because hee had delight in Jacobs daughter. Gen. 34. 19.* And so if men have a delight in spirituall exercises, they will take the first opportunity and not deferre and loyter about the businesse. So when *Abraham* was commanded to sacrifice his son, the Text saith, noting thereby his ready obedience, that *hee rose early in the morning, to go speedily about the work. Gen. 22. 3.* And of *Iacob*, it is said in like sort,

fort, that to expresse his thankfulnesse for Gods mercies, *hee rose up early in the morning, and set up a pillar, &c. Gen. 28. 18.* And so on the contrary of wicked men, who pursue their sinfull pleasures with delight, it is said, that they rise early to go about their work. So drunkards are said to rise early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink. *Isa. 5. 11.* And the inhabitants of Ierusalem, rose early and corrupted all their doings. *Zeph. 3. 7.* Yea, and God himselfe, to note his hearty desire of mans salvation, saith of himselfe, *I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking: but yee heard not. Ier. 7. 13.* and verse 25, *I have sent unto you all my*

B b 2 servants

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servants the Prophets, dayly rising up early and sending them. By all which, and other places of the like kind, we may see, that *early rising* for the doing of any thing, is taken as an argument of hearty affection and love to the same thing. And so on the contrary, slugging and delaying, is an argument of little affection and love. And hereby it appeareth, that their devotion is cold in Gods service, who lie in bed so long, that they come late and tardie to the worke.

2. This fault of slugging long in bed, is worthy of re-proofe, because by comming late to Gods service, they may come short of his blessing. *Esau* staid so long in hunting

hunting for his Venison, that the blessing was gone, before he came to receive it. *Gen. 27.* And afterward he found no place for repentance, or to revoke the former grant, though hee sought it with teares. *Heb. 12. 17.* Let this example scare sluggards out of their beds, and make our halfe-hearers, who come when a good part of the Service is past; to bethink themselves, and beware lest the blessing bee past, before they come to receive it.

The summe is, Hee that will heare with profit, must grant sufficient refreshing to nature, but not excessive; such as may cheere his senses, but not such as may dull and depresse them.

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III. The third *preparative* duty is, that before hand wee season our minds with some holy thoughts in private, that wee may bee the better disposed to good duties in publike. For looke in what frame our hearts stand when we come from home, and in the same wee shall finde them when wee are come to Gods house. If we jump in thither, being as it were yet warm with worldly thoughts; the minde in praying and hearing, and other duties will remaine the same that it was before, that is, stuffed and possessed with the thoughts and desires of the world. But if we turne our hearts toward God, and fixe our mindes on heavenly things,

Quicquid
ante ora-
tionis ho-
ram ani-
ma nostra

things, before wee come from home; this will dispose us to heavenly-mindednesse in the publike service. For example, let this be our practise, let us lift up our hearts and raise our thoughts to God-ward by meditating on his word and works, by thinking on our duty and the worke wee are about, by considering Gods greatnesse, in whose presence wee shall bee, and by powring out our soules to God in our prayers, that hee will direct our actions, and blesse his owne ordinance, and honour himselfe in our voluntary service: and then our hearts being thus turned upon God aforehand, we shalbe the more zealous

concep.
rit, neces.
se est ut
orantibus
nobis per
ingestio-
nem re-
cordatio-
nis occur-
rat. Quā-
obrem
quales o-
rantes re-
lumus in-
veniri, ta-
les nos
ante ora-
tionis tē-
pus pre-
parare
debemus.
Cassian.
Collat. 9.
c. 3. p. 502

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E.c. 51.

in praying, and the more attentive in hearing, and the more forward and ready in good duties every way.

This rule *Solomon* prescribeth us, when he saith, *Keep thy foot when goest into the house of God*, or (as the other Translation hath it) *Take heed to thy foot*: that is, as *Beza* paraphraseth the place,

[*Considera etiam atque etiam, quò tendas, & quem adeas*]

Think upon it againe and againe, whither thou art a going, and into whose presence thou comest. Thus hee commandeth, and so should wee do. When wee are to appeare before God, at the solemne times of his Service; wee should think whither it is that wee go, who

who it is that we deale with,
what it is that wee are then
to do, and how wee may re-
ceive comfort and profit by
our doing.

Thus we have the duty :
our part will bee to think
how well we have observed
it. If wee come to heare
without turning our hearts
toward God aforehand, wee
are not so fitted for this
work, as we should be. And
for want hereof, wee may
feare, lest as the King said to
his unmanerly guest ; *Friend
how camest thou in hitber, not
having on a wedding garment?*
Matt. 22. 12 : So God may
say to us, How is it, that
ye come to heavenly exerci-
ses, not having heavenly
mindes ? and why come ye

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Dan. 6. 10

to stand before God, when your hearts are turned towards the world? These things considered, my exhortation is, as *Daniel*, when he prayed, *set open his windows towards Ierusalem*, that he might looke toward that place, where God was, to whom he made his prayer: so when wee heare, or performe any service unto God, that then for the sharpening of our attention we would set open the windowes of our soules towards heaven; that while wee are hearing or reading, wee may look toward the place, where our Lord dwelleth, who is now speaking unto us.

IIII. The fourth and last preparative duty is, that before

fore we come to heare Gods word, we empty our soules of all knowen and unlawfull lusts; that so our hearts may bee fit receptacles for the word of Christ to dwell in. For, if the vessell be musty, it will marre the best wine, that can be powred into it; and if the stomach be filthy, it will corrupt the most wholesome meat; and if the ground bee cumbred with thornes and weeds, it will choake the purest seed. And so, if the soule bee defiled with sinfull lusts, it will choke the seed of Gods word, and corrupt this food of the soule, and make it unprofitable to the hearers. This S. *James* teacheth us, when he saith, *Lay apart all filthinesse*

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filthinesse and superfluity of naughtinesse; and receive with meeknesse the ingrafted word, which is able to save your soules. James 1.21. And so S. Peter, Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evill speakings; as new-borne babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that yee may grow thereby. 1. Pet. 2. 1, 2. In these places, these two Apostles do teach us two duties, the one principall and primarily intended; and that is, that wee receive Gods word with all readinesse, for establishing our soules in grace: and the other a preparative duty, that must go before, and make way for it, and that is, that first of all we lay aside all filthinesse

filthinesse and naughtinesse, and
finfull lusts. For more dis-
tinct and clearer understand-
ing of which rules, wee
may consider these particu-
lars in the Apostles words.
(1.) When we read in Saint
James, *Laying apart*; and in
S. Peter, *Laying aside*; the
word in the Originall in
both places is ἀποθέμενος; which
according to the propriety
of the Greek Tongue, no-
teth the time past: and
therefore is rendred by *Beza*
in the one place, *abjectis om-
nibus sordibus*, all filthinesse
having been cast aside; and
in the other, *deposita omni
malitia*, all naughtinesse ha-
ving beene laid apart; but
wee in our English, keeping
the idiotisme of the Greek
which

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which the Latin tongue cannot do, may more perspicuously render it thus, *Having laid apart all filthinesse, and all malice, and guile, &c.* But where in the second place we reade, *Receive the ingrafted word, and, Desire the sincere milke of the word*, the Originall words are, *δέξαδε τὸ ἐμψυλον λόγον*, and *ἄσθολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσα*: which sort of verbs *Clebard* calleth *Aorists*, having respect to their forme; but **Sylburgius* more properly and fitly, respecting their signification, calleth them *futura perfecta*, because they signifie the perfecting of an action to come. For all verbs of the Imperative mood, as these bee, though they may bee of

**Sylburg*
Gram.

of the Preter tense for their forme, yet are alwaies of the future tense for their signification. For things commanded, are not already done, but are to be done afterward; the precept ever in nature going before the performance. And therefore, *Linacer*, a learned and exact Grammarian, having first noted that all verbs of the Imperative moode are either of the present or preter tense; addeth withall, *Quibus tamen omnibus prateriti formis, si quis penitus inspiciat, perfectio absolutioque potius, quam actio ulla praterita significatur; ne quis non gerendum aliquid imperari putet.* Those that bee Scholars know what this note meaneth:

neth: those that bee not, may at least carie thus much with them, that the former words [*Lay apart*, or *Lay aside*] doe note the time past; and the later, [*Receive the word*, and, *Desire the sincere milk*,] doe implie the time to come. And hence every one may collect, that sin is first to be layed aside, and then the word of God to be heard. And therefore I called the duty signified by the former word, a *preparative* duty, which maketh way for that w^{ch} followeth after, and the duty signified by the later word, the *principall* duty, for which the preparative is intended. This is the first thing, that I note in these words of the Apo-

Apostles. (2.) The second is, that when *S. James* saith, *Lay apart all filthinesse, and all superfluity of naughtinesse*, he meaneth all iniquity and all sinfull lusts: and by giving thē this name, he compareth them to superfluities of indigestion, or to raw & indigested humors which distemper the stomach: and implieth hereby that Gods word is the food of our soules, the digesting whereof is hindered by these superfluities of sin. (3.) When *S. Peter* saith, *Laying aside all malice, &c. desire the sincere milk of the word*, hee compareth Gods word to wholesome meate, and implieth hereby, that these vicious qualities of malice, &c. are like

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like to corrupt humours, which doe hinder the nourishment of this meate. (4.) When S. James saith, *Lay apart all superfluities, &c. & receive the ingrafted word;* and when S. Peter saith, *Laying aside, &c. desire the sincere milk:* both of them meane that as good meat breedeth not good nourishment in a corrupt stomach; no more doth Gods word nourish our soules, unlesse these bad humours of sinne be first emptied and purged out. The summe of all is, that he who will thrive and grow in grace by the food of the word; must first disburden himself of the superfluities of sinne. And this sheweth that this emptying
out

out of all sinfull lusts , is a preparative duty necessary for them , that will receive good by Gods word.

This may suffice for proving of the point : but yet we shall more clearely & distinctly understand it, if we consider what helps and furtherances this purging out of sin will afford him , that cometh to heare Gods word for the profit of his soule. And they be these , and such like.

I. It qualifieth the minde for the clearer understanding of Gods word, and the mysteries of salvation contained in it. And that it doth in two respects.

I. Because, sinfull lusts are as so many clouds or dark mists

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mists cast before our eies, which hinder us from discerning of the truth, though otherwise it lye plaine before our face. This is gathered from that speech of our Saviour to the Jews ; *How can yee beleeve, which receive honor, one of another, and seek not the honour, that cometh from God alone. Ioh. 5. 44.* Note here, (1.) the unapt-nesse and indisposition of this people, to beleeve CHRIST S word: *how can ye beleeve?* (2.) the reason or cause hereof in these words, *which receive honour, one of another.* Hee meaneth that because they were given to vaine glory, and esteemed the praises of men more then the honor that cometh from

from God, therefore they could not beleeeve the Gospell, which did not onely bring contempt with it, but did teach men willingly to beare it. By which it appeareth, that their vaine-glory did so blinde their eies, that they could not acknowledge the truth of the word, which was contrary to it. And so, by the same reason, covetousnesse blindeth mens eies, that they cannot beleeeve any doctrine, that is contrary to their profit. And wantonnesblindeth their eies, that they cannot beleeeve that, which is contrary to their lusts. And revenge blinderth the eies, that they cānot see that truth, which is contrary to

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to their malice. And love of a mans selfe and of his own Teachers, doth so blind his eies, that he discerneth not the plaine truth, that crosseth his prejudice, and the opinions which his Masters have instilled into him. And in a word, every sinfull passion is as a cloud to darkē the understanding, that it cannot see any truth that is contrary to that sin. And this may be one reason, why the Apostle saith, that *the naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishnesse unto him: nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* I Cor. 2. 14. Hee meaneth that the mysteries of the Gospell are only discernable by

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til. lib. 1.

by a spirituall eie, whereas the naturall man hath no eies, but carnall. But contrariwise a cleane heart maketh a clear judgement, because hee that hath purged his heart from all sinfull lusts, is alike disposed for all truths; nor hath he any cloud within him, that may darken his minde, when he is to judge of them.

2. *Puritie* of heart disposeth a man to the understanding of Gods word, because his own feeling within himselfe, and the experience that hee hath of the power of godlinesse, and the deceits of sin, will bee as a cleare Commentarie to the

Ut boni
virissimus
voluntate
maximè
constat;
quam qui
verâ fide
induerit,

facile easdem, quæ virtutem docent, artes accipiet. Quintil. lib. 12. cap. 11. pag. 752.

the rules and doctrines of Scripture, which concerne those points. If one of us, who is a father, and considereth what his owne affection was to his little son, when hee did beat him for his faults; should read that Text of *David*, *As a father pitieth his children; even so the LORD pitieth them that feare him. Ps. 103. 13:* or that of *Salomon*; *Whom the Lord loveth, hee correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom hee delighteth. Pro. 3. 12:* that man would more clearely see, and more feelingly judge of Gods tender mercies towards his children, described in those Texts. And so he that hath had his heart wounded with
the

the sting of sin, will best understand that Text, *A broken and contrite heart, O God, wilt thou not despise. Psal. 51. 17.* And, he that is a pittitull and a mercifull man, will best understand that of S. Paul, *Bee yee kinde, one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for CHRIST S sake hath forgiven you. Ephes. 4. 32:* and that other, *Put on, (as the Elect of God, holy & beloved) bowels of mercies, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, meeknesse, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, &c. Col. 3. 12.* And the like may be said of all other vertues and graces, in which the maine duties of christianity do consist.

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(a) Inst.
lib. 5. cap.
33. pag.
134.

And he that is thus disposed before he cometh to heare; is in a faire way to understand the Scriptures, when they bee alledged, and to conceive the Preachers meaning, when hee explaineth and applieth them to his conscience. And hence it is, that (a) *Cassian* a learned & judicious Writer doth say of *Theodorus* a Religious man of that time, and one that was expert in the Scriptures, that the thing, which made him so skilfull in Gods book, was [*Non tam studium lectionis, vel literatura mundi, quàm sola puritas cordis,*] not so much his reading of learned books or his human learning, as his purity & sincerity of heart alone. And this man
(saith

(saith the same (b) Autor) when men admired his clear understanding of Scriptures, and desired of him the meaning of certaine places, answered them, that he who wou'd come to the true understanding of Scriptures, must not bestow his paines in reading of Commentaries, but rather bend his minde to cleare his soule from fleshly desires. [*Quibus expulsis, confestim cordis oculi, sublato velamine passionum, sacramenta Scripturarum velut naturaliter incipient contemplari.*] For these vitious lusts being expulsed & driven out, the eie of the soule after this vaile of passions is removed from before it, doth begin, as it were by its owne disposition

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(c) Si
quidem
nobis nō
ut essent
incognita
vel obicu-
ra, sancti
Spiritus
gratiā
promul-
gata sunt:
sed nostro
vitio, ve-
lamine
peccato-
rū cordis
oculos
obnubilā-
te, red-
dūtur ob-
scuras: qui-
bus rur-
sum natu-
rali red-
ditis in-
nitati,
ipsa Scri-
pturarum
sanctarū
lectio ad
contem-
plationē
veræ se-
rentiæ
abundē
etiam
sola suf-
ficiat.
Cassian.
ibid.

and temper to understand the mysteries of the Scriptures.

(c) For (as hee addeth) the holy Ghost did not so pen and divulge the Scriptures, that they might bee unknownen and dark: but they become hard and obscure through our owne default, who with a vaile of sins, do cover the eies of our mindes; like the vaile, that laie on the heart of the Jews, while they read the books of *Moses.* 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15.

II. This puritie of soule disburdened of her sinfull lusts, disposeth a man to the obedience of Gods word, and maketh him ready and prepared to observe and do what is therein prescribed. Now these works
of

of obedience, they bee the very fruits & harvest cropp, for reaping whereof the seed of Gods word is sown. For the end of our preaching and reading, is that men may heare; and the end of their hearing is, that they may learne and know Gods will; and the end of their learning & knowledge is that they may do Gods will and keep his commandements. This gradation of causes, is clearly expressed by *Moses Deut. 31. 11, 12.* And it is intimated by our Saviour also in the Gospell, when he saith, *This peoples heart is waxed grosse, and their eares are dul of hearing, & their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their*
Cc 3 eyes,

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eies, & heare with their eares,
 & understand with their heart,
 and should bee converted, and
 I should heale them. *Matt* 13.
 15. By these speeches it ap-
 peareth, that Doing is the
 end of Hearing. Now that
 which in our hearing doth
 fit us for this end, is if wee
 purge our soules aforehand
 of all sinfull lusts, and yeeld
 up our selves to be moulded
 by the word. For they that
 be in love with any lust, are
 loth to heare and more loth
 to do that which God com-
 mandeth to the contrary.
Herod, because hee was in
 love with his fleshly lusts,
 would not hearken to *Iohn*
Baptist when hee tould him
 of his incest: the Pharises,
 because they were in love
 with

Mark, 6.

before hearing.

with their money, derided our Saviour, when he preached against covetousnesse. And *Abab*, because hee was resolved to go up to *Ramoth Gilead* to battell; put *Micaiah* in prison, for advising him to the contrary. And so it is still. He that is resolved to live in oppression, will not care for the Preachers words, when he telleth him of *S. Pauls* threatening, *Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, because that the LORD is an avenger of all such.* 1 *Thess.* 4. 6. And he that is resolved to go on in his uncleane lusts, will not care, when hee is tould of that sentence, *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* *Heb.* 13. 4. And

C c 4

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Luk. 16.
13, 14.

1 King
22.

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he that is given to his bellie cheare, will sleight that caveat of our Saviour, *Take heed, lest your hearts bee overcome with surfetting & drunkenesse, &c. Luk. 21. 34.* And generally whosoever is led with any luit, untill he be content to part with that lust, will never bee willing to yeeld obedience to that Scripture, which forbiddeth it. Yea, and they who are zealously affected to religion, and performe holy duties with some care, yet if they have but any one unmortified passion behinde; that lust will make them to withdraw the shoulder, when they should yeeld obedience to the word. A plaine proof hereof may bee seene in the rich

rich young man mentioned
Mar. 10. 17, &c. For hee
came to C H R I S T with
great zeale, and was resolved
to do any thing that hee
might be saved: *Good Master*
(saith hee,) *what good thing*
shall I do, &c? But when
our L O R D bade him, *Go*
sell all that thou hast, &c:
and thou shalt have treasure
in heaven: the Text saith,
he was sad at that saying, and
went away grieved. The mea-
ning is, that though he were
a forward young man, and
purposed to do any thing,
that C H R I S T would ap-
point him for gaining of
eternall life; yet because
hee was in love with his
wealth, he thought this to
bee too hard a condition to

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be accepted of. And so it is, and will bee with all other men: if they be in love with any one sinne, that will not suffer them to submit to that word of God, which forbiddeth it. But contrariwise, he that hath emptied his soule of every known sin, is ready for every commandment, & will submit to whatsoever God shall enioyne him. For having purged out every lust, he hath nothing left behind, that may oppose GODS word, when it commandeth him his duty. Such a man, if God should command him to sacrifice his life for religion, as he commanded *Abraham* to sacrifice his son; he would say with *S. Paul*, *My life is*

not

not deare unto mee , so I may
finish my course with joy. Act.
20.24. And if God should re-
quire restitution of ill got-
ten goods , hee would say
with *Zaccheus*; *If I have ta-*
ken any thing from any man
by false accusation , or any
other unjust dealing , I will
restore him fourefold. Luk. 19.
8. And if GOD should re-
quire him to mortifie him-
self by hard and austere cha-
stisements ; hee would say
with *S. Paul* , *I will keep under*
my body , and bring it in sub-
jection. 1 Cor. 9. 27. And so
in all other the most trouble-
some services. For what can
be too hard for him in Gods
commandements, who hath
forsaken every thing, that
is forbidden by them? Thus
the

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the purging of the heart from all sin, maketh a man ready for obedience of every commandement: which is the very crowne and the glory of our hearing.

III. This *cleansing* of the soule from all sinfull lusts, inviteth God to assist us with grace, and to blesse our hearing with successe, and to increate all his mercies towards us. *For the secret of the Lord is with them that feare him, and he will shew them his covenant.* Psal. 25. 14. And, my sonne (saith Solomon) if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandements with thee, &c. then shalt thou understand the feare of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God. *For the Lord giveth wise*

wisedome: out of his mouth
commeth knowledge and un-
derstanding. *Prov. 2. 1, 5, 6.*
And of *Cornelius* wee reade,
that hee being a devout man,
and one that feared God, and
gave much almes to the people,
and prayed God continually;
God was so well pleased
herewith, that first hee sent
an Angel from heaven to
direct him what course hee
should take for saving of his
soule; and then hee sent *Peter*
to tell him those things,
by which both hee and his
household should bee saved:
and lastly, while *Peter* was
preaching, and *Cornelius* was
hearing, he powred downe
the holy Ghost upon all
them that heard the word:
Act. 10. And so it will bee
with

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with us : if wee bee like to *Cornelius* in devotion, serving God in purity of heart; we need not doubt, but God will send us such Teachers, as may direct us in the waies of salvation, and will grant us the assistance of his Spirit, to blesse our hearing with an happy successe.

But on the contrary, if any man come to heare Gods word with the conscience of known sinne, or with any lust, that lieth unmortified within him; such a one provoketh God to blind his eyes, and to curse his labors. To this purpose the Prophet speaketh, *Ezek. 14. 6, 7, 8, 9. Say to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God, Repent and turne your selves from*

before hearing.

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from your idols, and turne away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himselfe from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a Prophet to enquire of him concerning me, I the Lord will answer him by my selfe: and I will set my face against that man, and will make him a signe and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and yee shall know that I am the Lord. And if a Prophet be deceived, when hee hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet, &c. Note here

here (1.) the sinne that is supposed to bee in this people, *If they set up their idols in their heart, &c.* He meaneth, if they cherished idolatry in their heart, and looked on their abominations, as the thing that they loved. (2.) Consider the punishment that God threatneth against this sinne, and that is twofold. 1. That if such a one should come to a Prophet for instruction, *God* would give him the *answere*, and *set his face against him, &c.* that is, instead of instructing him in his word, hee would persecute him with his judgements: and 2. that if a Prophet were *deceived*, as some times they were, God in his anger did
suffe

suffer him to erre, for a punishment to that man, that came to heare with a polluted soule. (3.) Note the remedy or the meanes, how to avoid this judgement, and that is set downe in these words, *Repent and turne your selves from your idols, and from your abominations.* Lay these notes together: and then yee may see, that if a man come to heare Gods word with a purpose of sin in his heart, (for every such sinne is his idol;) God will give him over to be seduced and to be plagued for his sin: and that the purging out of sinne, is the way to avoid all this mischief. Agreeable hereunto is that also of the Apostle, where hee saith of
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Antichrist, that his coming should bee after the working of Satan, with all power, and signes, and lying wonders, and with all deceivablenesse of unrighteousnesse in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: and that for this cause, God should send them strong delusions, that they should beleieve a lie, that they all might bee damned, who beleaved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse. 2. Thess. 2. 9, 10, 11. By all this we may see, that if any man come to heare Gods word, with a cleare conscience, purged from dead works; God is ever ready to teach and direct that man in the right way to heaven. But if
any

any come with a conscience defiled with knowen sinne ; God forsaketh that man, and leaveth him to false teachers , to bee seduced and mis-led to his ruine.

Thus the point is cleared, that he who will heare with profit, must first empty his soule of all sinfull lusts : the uses follow.

Vse 1. Seeing such preparative duties are required for a profitable hearing of Gods word ; every wise Christian should examine himselfe, how well he hath performed those duties, and by them *ploughed up the fallow ground* of his heart, that the good seed may be received into a good soile. More particularly, whether before his

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his hearing, hee have laboured to empty his heart of earthly thoughts, that so hee might bee at leasure for God; whether he have used to season his mind with heavenly thoughts at home, that hee might be attentive in Gods service; and whether by due examination of his wayes, hee have sought to cast out all unlawfull lusts out of his soule; or, whether hee have not rather busied his mind with thoughts of the world, when he was come before God, to be instructed in his word; or, whether hee have not gone into Gods house, without thinking whither he was a going; or finally, whether he have not caried some sin with

with him into the Church, which no perswasions of the Preacher could make him to forsake. Those that have prepared themselves before hand, may comfort themselves with this thought, that the good seede hath been sown in good ground and therefore will bring forth fruit to eternall life. But if we consider how little fruit of obedience there appeareth in the world, we may well think, that most men have used but small preparation before their hearing. And therefore now it is high time, to beginne this so necessary a work, that their negligence do not make their labors fruitlesse.

Vse 2. Seeing the heart is
not

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not fit for the seed of Gods word, till the rubbish bee weeded out, and the superfluities of sinne purged away; it standeth us upon, to search every corner of our soules, lest some lust lie lurking there, which wee have not discovered, nor have had care to expell. For every such lust is a superfluitie of naughtinesse, which hindreth our growing by the word. For example, if there bee a lust of adultery and uncleannesse, that is a superfluity of naughtinesse: purge out this, or else, it will hinder your growth in grace. And if there be a lust of pride and vaine glory, that is a superfluity, which must bee purged out, or else
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the word will not enter in. And so I may say of covetousnesse, and of malice, and of revenge, and of every evill lust: they be superfluities of naughtinesse: and if they be suffered to harbour in the soule, they will shut the doore against all good instructions.

Use 3. There is hence encouragement and comfort for all true hearted Christians, because having purged out their lusts, and resolving to do what God shall command, they are rightly qualified for hearing of Gods word. If any thing be necessary to be knowen, which is too hard for their understanding, Gods promise is, that he will reveile it

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it unto them, and leade them in the right way. Our Saviour hath said, *If any man will do Gods will, hee shall know of the doctrine, whether it bee of God, or no. Ioh. 7. 17.* Where (1.) when he saith, *If any man will do Gods will,* he meaneth, if hee be resolved to performe, whatsoever God shall cōmand him. And (2.) when hee saith of such a man, that *he shall know of the doctrine, whether it bee of God,* he meaneth, he shall bee guided to know and understand the maine points of faith, even so much as may serve to save his soule. For first, the eie of his soule is cleare from mists and foggs of passion; by reason whereof hee will discern those

those truths, which are proportionable to his understanding. And secondly, if any thing be too high for his apprehension, God will reveile that unto him by one meanes or other, rather then so faithfull a servant of his should erre from the right way, that leadeth to eternall life. And consequently, he that doth settle his heart in a sincere purpose to do what God shall enjoyne him in his word; may bee confident in this hope, that he shall not erre with danger to his soule. A great comfort this may bee to a true Christian in these wrangling times, and dayes of contention, wherein variety of questions doth

D d much

Cap. 12

much distract the minds of many men. My conclusion is this, when we go to heare Gods word preached, or take a Bible into our hands to reade; let us abandon every known sinne, and resolve to serve God in every known duty: and then our comfort is, we shall *know the truth, and the truth shall make us free.*

CAP.



C A P. XIII.

*Duties to be performed in the
time of our hearing.*

Hitherto of *preparative* duties, which go before our hearing : now wee are to consider of duties, required in the time of hearing. And they, as I conceive of them at this time, are three. (1.) Attention to the things, which are spoken : (2.) Reverence to the person, that speaketh : and (3.) wisdom in fitting all to our owne use.

I. The first is *Attention.*

D d 2 And

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 *Nigron.
 de exhor.
 domest.
 cap. 5. nu.
 15. p. 89.

And that (as * one defineth it, not unfitly,) is [*seria & diligens animi applicatio ad ea, quæ dicuntur*] a serious applying of the minde to the things, that are said: or, it is, when we bend the mind and understanding to observe and mark that which is spoken.

Concerning this dutie there are two things to bee declared. (1.) What use and necessitie there is of it in our hearing: and (2.) what meanes wee may use for attaining to it.

[I.] What use there is of it. And the answer is, the uses of it are three especially.

I. *Attention* is that which doth *enlive* our hearing, and maketh

maketh it effectuell and profitable. For if we heare, and attend not, we do not learn by the instructions that should teach us; we are not moved by the exhortations that should perswade us to well-doing; nor are we feared by the threatnings that should deterre us from sin. In summe, whatsoever is said to do us good, is as water spilt upon the ground, that cannot be taken up for any use. But Attention in hearing, is like the plough that goeth before the Sower. For as the plough openeth the ground that the seed may enter in, and take root under the furrows: so attention setteth open the heart that it may receive the

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word in, when it is spoken by the Preacher. And therefore when the Scriptures do describe diligent & zealous Hearers, they set them out by their attentiveness to the word spoken. Thus it is said of the people in *Nehem.* time, that *the eares of all the people were attentive unto the booke of the Law*, when it was read unto them. *Nehem.* 8. 3. And so of the people in our Saviours time, it is said, that they *were very attentive to heare him*; or, (as the other Translation hath it,) they *hanged upon him*, when they *heard him*. *Luk.* 19. 48. The meaning is, their mindes did hang upon his lips, to suck-in his doctrine, as the childe hangerh upon the dugs

Mark, 6.

dugs, that hee may suck in his mothers milk. Whence wee are further advertised, that as children, who follow the dug, do thrive and grow by the milk; so the hearer, that is attētive to the word, doth grow and thrive by it. But without attention, as our prayers are a lip-labour, which God respecteth not; and for which he reproveth the Jews, *This people draweth neere unto mee, with their mouth, and honoreth mee with their lips, but their hearts are farre from me: Matt. 15. 8:* so without attention, our hearing is an ear-labour, of which God may say by the same reason, *This people draw neere unto mee with their eares, but their heart*

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is farre from mee. Attention then is therefore necessary, because it maketh our hearing profitable & available.

2. *Attention to GODS word*, maketh God willing and ready to instruct us, and lead us by his grace. For as we use to say of wise men, that they strike, while the yron is hot; because then it will yeeld to the hammer, and may easily be facioned, as the workman will: so God dealeth with his people; when they are ready & rightly disposed for his blessings, then hee useth to bestow them. *Open thy mouth wide*, (said God) *and I will fill it.* Psal. 81. 10. So, if men open their hearts, &
bee

bee ready to receive , then
God openeth his hand , and
powreth in his blessings. But
if men shut their mouths,
when they should receive,
God will shut his hand,
when hee should give. And
there is great reason for it.
For a wise householder, be-
cause he will not have his
wine spilt , therefore will
not powre it upon the vessel,
when the mouth is stopped.
And so our wise God , be-
cause hee would not have
his graces lost , will not
bestow them ; when men
are not fit to receive them.
This point is clearly mani-
fested in the example of *Samuel* :
When God called, *Samuel*;
Samuel, *Samuel* , once and again
and the third time ; he still

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went to Eli, to know what he would have. And all this while God said nothing to *Samuel*, of the message that he intended for him. But at last, when God called, as at other times, *Samuel*, *Samuel*; then *Samuel*, turned himselfe toward God and said, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*. And then God reveiled himselfe unto him by his word, and instructed him in his will. 1 *Sam.* 3. 10. And so, if our mindes wander abroad, and talk with the vanities of the world, while GOD speaketh unto us in his word preached or read: it is no marvell, if he take his word from us, and give it to them, that are better disposed for it. Or, if he

he suffer his word to remain with us, yet hee may denie his grace, that might make it profitable unto us. Attention then is necessary in this respect also, because it moveth God to teach and direct us in the right way.

3. *Attention* is an act of the minde, by which wee witnesse our due respect to GOD and his word. *Iob* describing the account, that men made of him in his prosperitie, saith, *To mee men gave eare, and waited, and kept silence at my counsell. Iob 29. 21.* And on the contrary, it is a great indignitie to a man, if while he is talking with us, wee turne our backs upon him, and looke an other way.

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A man of place or facion would take it in ill part to be so neglected by us. But the indignity is much greater, if when the Lord of heaven speaketh unto us, about the weightie affaires of our salvation, wee turne from him, and talk with the vanities of the world. Such behaviour is not fit for Gods presence, nor can we think to please him, when wee neglect him so much. It is said of *Lydia*, that the LORD opened her heart, that she attended to the things, which were spoken of Paul. *Act. 16. 14.* Which sheweth, that if wee attend not, when God speaketh to us in his word, it is because our hearts are shut against God
and

and we denie him entrance
and entertainment : but if
God by his grace have once
opened our hearts , then we
with attention will hearken
to his word. Again we read,
that Gods delight is in such
men , as do heare his word
with an awfull reverence &
dutifull respect. Thus saith
the LORD , *The heaven is
my throne , and the earth is my
footstoole , &c. for all those
things hath mine hand made ;
and all those things have been ,
saith the Lord. But to this man
will I looke , even to him that
is poore , and of a contrite spirit ,
and trembleth at my word.* Is.
66. 1, 2. Which is , as if hee
should say , Heaven & earth
and all the world are mine ;
and I may be where & with
whom

whom I will: but hee that trembleth or standeth in awe of my word, is the man that I have made choise of, and that I delight to dwell with. But if any bee carelesse and unrespective of God, when he speaketh unto him; that man as hee neglecteth God, so is he neglected of him. The summe is, Attention to the word spoken, is therefore necessary, that wee may shew a due and dutifull respect to God, whose word it is.

[II.] This may serve to shew the use of this dutie: the next enquiry is to seek for such helps, as may further us in the performance of it. And sure, this is a point of great moment, and worthy

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thy of our best care. For, how ever attention bee so necessary for right hearing, nor will any of us deny the profitable use of it: yet such is our frailty and folly, that usually our thoughts wander all the world over, while wee are in Gods presence, and should heare his word, which is *able to save our soules*. For sometimes, wee do willingly busie our selves with earthly thoughts about our Trades, and our Lands, and our household affaires, and other things of like nature. And sometimes, as the devill stood at *Ioshuabs* right hand to resist him, *Zach. 3. 1*: so hee standeth at our elbow, and casteth worldly thoughts into our mindes,
or

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or heaviness of sleepe into our heads, or disesteeme of the word spoken, into our hearts. And at all times, such is the frailty of the flesh, and our daily acquaintance with the things of this world; that though we strive to be attentive, yet by-thoughts will creepe in, and distract our mindes, while wee are about that good work. By reason whereof, it will bee hard to drive away idle thoughts, and impossible to be altogether without them. And therefore, it will bee a labour well bestowed, if by enquiry wee can finde out some such helps, as may serve to heale our infirmities, and to keepe us steadfast in this duty. For which

pur-

purpose, I have thought on some rules; they that are experienced in asceticall exercises, may perhaps adde more, and finde better; and they shall do well to further us with their store. The rules that at this present I have in readinesse, are these.

I. *Rule.* It will bee good, to accustome our selves to the dayly reading of Scriptures, and frequent Meditations on heavenly things. For if the minde bee thoroughly seasoned with such thoughts, it will not be so ready to admit of imaginations and fanfies; that being the readiest for our thoughts, with which wee are most familiarly acquainted. For proove of this, let

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let us ask our owne hearts and they will tell us, that if a man have beene busied in scraping and heaping up riches, his minde while hee is in the Church, will runne upon his baggs, and bonds, and his accounts, and other such meanes of thriving in the world; and if a man bee given to dalliance and fleshly lusts; his mind will runne upon his Minion, and the works of fleshly delights: and if a man be set on ambition, and desire of high places; his minde will runne on the meanes of rising, and of great offices, and places of preferment. And, in a word (as our Saviour saith) *Where a mans treasure is, there will his heart bee also.*

Matt.

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Citum
satis atq;
efficax re.
medium
peterit
oboriri, si
eandem
diligenti-
am atque
instantiā
quam te
in illis se-
cularibus
studiis
habuisse
dixisti, ad
spiritualiū
Scriptura-
rum vo-
lueris le-
ctionem
meditati-
onemque
transferre
&c Cass.
Coll. 14.
c. 13. p.
645, 646.

Matt. 6. 21. Whence it fol-
loweth, that if a mans study
and delight be in Gods Law,
and about duties of Gods
service, those things will
most readily come to his
minde, wherein hee is ofte-
nest busied. And when such
things are mentioned and
talked of, he wil as constant-
ly and as attentively both
heare and observe them, as
a worldly minded man will
heare and speak of his pro-
fits, or an effeminate man
of his pleasures, or an ambi-
tious man of his honours.
And as a worldly man, when
he is about his purchases
and bargains, goeth serious-
ly to work, and is not easily
diverted from the businesse
that hee is about; so the re-
ligious

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religious minded man, if hee bee as heartily religious, as the other is covetous, will bee so serious and attentive in matters of Gods service, that other by-thoughts will not easily divert or turne away his minde. And therefore, if worldly thoughts do much disturbe our hearing, it is an argument that the studie of the world is more frequent with us, and more delightfull to us, then the studie of Gods word. For redressing of which error, and to keepe our mindes from evagations and distractions; our care must be, to place our studie on Gods word, and thereby to season our mindes with a love of heavenly things, and a se-

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serious care of our salvation.

2. It will be an helpe also, if we use such posture of body, as may be apt to keep our senses waking, and to drive away heaviness & sleep. How this is to be done, we may take direction from examples of former times. First then wee read in the Gospel, that when our Lord had read his Text, and was ready to speak unto the people, *the eyes of all them that were in the Synagogue, were fastened upon him. Luk. 4. 20.* Which words, as they shew with what attention they prepared to heare the Sermon; so they intimate, that by this means they were likely to continue their attention. For as the mind sendeth

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deth out the eies, to look upon that which it selfe liketh; so the eies, if they bee fastened on an object, do stirre up the minde to think on that thing, which they present to its view. Consequently, as gazing abroad distracteth the minde with varietie of objects; so the fastening of them on the speaker, doth settle the mind, where the eies are fixed. And by reason hereof, it will bee some help to sharpen our attention, if sometimes, & as occasion requireth, wee fasten our eies upon the Preachers face, & look that way, where we desire our minds to be. Againe, *Solomon* saith of the wicked man, that he *shutteth his eies to devise forward*

ward things. Prov. 16. 30. He meaneth, that as men, when they are in serious meditation, do shut the eies, that nothing may distract their minds; so the wicked man shutteth his eies, that hee with more intention may devise mischief. And so in this work of hearing, it may sometimes be an help to attention, if wee look downward, or cover the eies; that the minde having no distraction from without, may be the more intent on his present businesse. Thirdly, wee read of the ancient Monks in Egypt: (And the name of *Monks*, was then as honorable for their devotion, as now it is growen contemptible for the superstition of

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* Humi
namque
diutius
procum-
bentem,
nō solum
cogitati-
onibus
aiunt, ve-
rū et iā
somo
gravius
impugna-
ri. Cas-
sian. Inst.
lib. 2. c. 7.
pag. 27.

of later times:) that they in
their prayers did sometimes
cast themselves downe up-
on the ground, and anone
after, rose up againe, and
praied standing, with their
hands lifted up to heaven.
And this they did, * *because,*
as they said, if a man did lye
long upon the ground, he would
bee set upon, not onely by idle
thoughts, but more especially
by sleepe. And so, if in our
hearing, wee finde that by
long sitting at ease, wee
grow heavie and dull of hea-
ring; wee should rise and
stand up, to awaken our
senses. And if by long stan-
ding wee finde our selves
weary of our worke, wee
may for a time seek some
ease by sitting: and so still
change

change the site of the body, and use such varietie in gestures, as for the present we finde most availeable to keep us in attention.

3. It will bee an other help, if we labour to remove all *lets and impediments*, that use to disturb us. *Solomons* rule is, *It is not for Kings to drink wine, nor for Princes strong drink: lest they drink, & forget the Law, & pervert the judgmēt of any of the afflicted.*

Prov. 31. 4, 5. He meaneth that drinking of wine, and strong drink might make them unfit for judicature, & doing of Justice: & in such a case even Kings were bound to avoid it; lest it should disable them for the doing of their duties. And this

E e rule

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rule bindeth us also to avoid such things, as may hinder us in Gods service. If wee drink wine & strong drink, that is apt to fume into the head and to procure drow-sinesse and sleepe; if we eat a full meale, that calleth the spirits to the stomach for concoction, and in their absence, the braine is disabled for contemplation and religious thoughts; and if before we come to Church, we drowne our selves in meriments and sports, that will season the minde with carnall delights, and make the soule unfit to relish the things of the Spirit: and if any man stuff his mind with worldly cares, and busineses of this life; that will leave
no

the time of hearing.

no roome for spirituall instructions to enter in. And if any of us do finde, that by these or any other such occasions we be hindered in our hearing; wee must forbear drinking of wine, and feeding to the full, and delighting in carnall sports, & cumbring our selves with worldly cares, and what soever else may breed either drownsinnesse or distraction. Else, it will bee impossible, that wee should heare with attention, and as impossible that we should profit without it.

4. It will bee an help to our hearing, if while wee are about that work, we do ever and anone reflect upon our selves, and consider

Ee 2 what

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what thoughts doe then lodge within us. And if we finde distractions to divert us, we should blame our untoward hearts, bewaile our corruptions, and recall the minde to his businesse again. This will help us against distractions, because our heart will learne by often checks, to bee the more watchfull; and we by condemning our selves for our neglect of God and our own good, shall be made the more warie of offending any more: even as a traveller, that hath misse his way through heedlessness, will bee the more carefull afterward to observe every turning, and to avoid every by-waie, that might mislead him.

These

These rules I have thought not unfit for this purpose : if any man have those that bee better, hee may leave these at his pleasure, and make use of that which may do him more good.

II. The next vertue to be exercised in the time of our hearing, is due *reverence* to God and his holy word. *Solomon* requireth it of us in our prayers and praises of God : *When* (saith he) *thou goest to the house of God, bee not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hastie to utter any thing before God. For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy words be few. Eccles. 5. 1, 2.* Wee may note in this sentence two things, a rule and

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a reason. (1.) A Rule, & that is expressed two waies: 1. negatively in these words, *Be not rash, &c.* He meaneth that we should not presume to speak unto God, but with premeditation and advised sobernesse. 2. Affirmatively, in those words, *Let thy words be few.* He meaneth that our words should be well weighed; and then they will not be many: & that our speech should bee sparing; such, as may argue modestie and awfulness, rather then too much familiaritie and boldnesse. This is the Rule. (2.) The reason hereof given in the Text, is; *For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth.* Hee meaneth that there is as much distance between him and

and us men, as is betweene
heaven and earth: and that
as farre as heaven is higher
then the earth, so farre, and
more also, is Gods great-
nesse above our meanenesse
and low condition. And
therefore, as when we come
before an earthly King, we
are wary and observant, lest
any word should fall from
us, that beseemeth not his
presence: so, and much
more carefull should we be,
when wee come before the
King of Heaven, lest any
word may slip from us, not
beseeming his greatnes. This
Solomon requireth of us,
when we come to speak to
God, in our praiers, or praises
of his name: and the same
reason holdeth, and there-

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fore the same rule should be observed, when wee come to heare God speaking to us in his word. Wee must not be rash and bolde, and over-familiar with our LORD and Master: but heare with reverence, when hee speaketh unto us; and tremble at his word, when he commandeth us, and laieth upon us a charge of obedience. And the reason is good: *for God is in heaven, and wee are upon earth*; and therefore wee should learne to keep distance, and never appeare before him without tokens of submission and reverence.

Now this reverence may bee seene and observed in three things; (1.) in a reverent

reverent esteeme of God and his word, (2.) in a dutifull behaviour, while we are in his presence: and (3.) in a modest quietnesse & silence, while he is speaking unto us.

[I.] In a *reverend esteeme* of God and his word; when we so think of them, and the place where they are present, as becometh his greatnesse, and their worth and dignitie. And this duty wee shall performe, if wee observe two rules.

(1.) That we conceive of God as of the Lord of heaven and earth, whose glory so farre surpasseth not onely our meane condition, but our shallow apprehension, as that we are no more able to abide his presence, then a

Ee 5 weak

weak eie is able to look up-
on the sunne in his strength.

And therefore S. Paul de-
scribeth God to bee *the bles-
sed and onely Potentate, the
King of kings, and Lord of
lords: who onely hath immor-
tality, and dwelleth in the light,
which no man can approch un-
to; whom no man hath scene,
nor can see.* 1. Tim. 6. 15, 16.

In these words the glory of
our Lord is set out by three
things: (1.) By his owne
greatnesse; *He is a Potentate,
a King, and a Lord, that hath
immortality and light:* (2.)
By a comparison with all o-
ther great Ones; *He is the
only Potentat, the king of kings
and Lord of lords:* (3.) By
his surpassing glory farre a-
bove all conceit, and apprehen-

hension of men; *He dwelleth in the light that no man can approach unto; no man hath seene him, nor can see him.* Thus every word doth some way set out his incomparable glory; which being considered accordingly will breed an awfull esteeme thereof, and a trembling before him. And from hence it is, that the *Scraphims* did cover their faces, when hee appeared unto them; and the posts of the doore mooved, when hee spake; and the Prophet cried out, *Wo is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of uncleane lips, and mine eyes have seene the King, the Lord of hosts.* *Isai. 6.2,4.* And for the same reason, when *Moses* (like the sons of

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of Zebedee, not knowing what hee asked) desired to see Gods glory; hee was told that *no man could see Gods face, and live.* Gods back-parts hee was vouchsafed to see, that is, some small luster of his glory: and yet then, hee had need to bee put to the *clift of a rock*, and to be covered with Gods hand, lest the glory of the LORD should overcome him with its luster. *Exod. 33. 19. &c.* And from the same ground it is, that the people of Israel, after they had heard the voice of God speaking unto them in mount Sina; they were amazed and said, *If wee heare the voice of the Lord our God any more, wee shall die. For who is there of all*

all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God, speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Dent. 5.25. Thus the Angels, and the Prophets, and the people of God have beene affected, if God at any time have manifested himselfe to them in glory. And thus, and in this maner we should think of God, when hee speaketh to us in his word; and alwaies cary a reverend awe towards his Majesty, whensoever wee are before him. So *Iacob* did; when God had reveiled himselfe unto him in a vision by night, and he was now awaked out of his sleepe, hee said, *Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And hee*

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hee was afraid (saith the Text) *and said, How dreadful is this place? This is no other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* Gen. 28.16,17. Note in this passage. (1.) How *Iacob* was affected at Gods presence, *He was afraid*, meaning, that he was struck with an awfull conceit of Gods Majestie, in whose presence he was. And so should we be: when we come into Gods presence, and heare him uttering the wonderfull things of his Law, wee should in all awfull reverence, humble our selves before him. (2.) Note what *Iacob* said upon consideration of Gods presence. First hee said, *God is in this place*; hee meant, that God
by

by appearing and reveiling
himselſe to his ſervant, did
ſhew himſelſe to bee there
preſent, though *Iacob* never
thought of any ſuch thing.
And ſo, when God pleaſeth
to reveile himſelſe unto us
by his word, though wee do
not ſee or diſcerne it with
our bodily eies; yet wee
muſt know that God is there
preſent, becauſe he reveileth
himselſe. Secondly, *Iacob*
ſaid, *How dreadful is this place?*
This is no other but the houſe
of God, &c. The meaning
is, that becauſe God ſhewed
himselſe by his viſions in
this place; therefore the
place was to bee eſteemed
as Gods houſe, even as hea-
ven it ſelſe, in which it plea-
ſeth him to dwell. And ſo,
when

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when wee come into the Church, the place where God doth speak with us, and hath promised his presence; we should esteeme that, as Gods house where he dwelleth, and as *the gate of heaven*, which is the place of his habitation. Thus wee should think of God and his presence, when he speaketh unto us out of his word. And that is the first rule to be observed by us, for declaring of our reverence towards him.

(2.) That wee esteeme the word spoken by Gods Minister out of the Scriptures, as the very word of the Almighty God. This *S. Paul* commendeth in the *Theſſalonians*: *For this cause* (saith

(saith he) *we thank God without ceasing, because when yee received the word of God, which yee heard of us; yee received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God. 1. Thessal. 2. 13.* Here are two things considerable: (1.) Who it was that spake and delivered this word, and that was *Paul*, a man like unto themselves: and (2.) Whose word they esteemed it to be; not *Pauls*, nor any other mans, but Gods alone. And there was great reason for it. For if the King should send an Officer, with commission to proclaime his will to his people; no man would say, that this message were the will or word of the Officer, who

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who proclaimed it, but the will of the King, who commanded it. And to these Thessalonians did rightly esteeme the word preached, *as Gods word*, from whom it was sent, and not as *Pauls* word, by whom it was delivered. And they are commended for so doing, as having rightly distinguished betweene God and his Minister: so it will bee our praise, if when wee heare Gods word, delivered by a mortall man, yet wee esteeme it as the word of the immortall and ever blessed God. A good rule then it is, that wee esteeme the word spoken by the Minister, as the word sent from the Lord Almighty.

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These rules, if they be duly observed, will further us diverse waies to the right hearing of Gods word with profit.

1. They will work in us *attentivenesse*, to mark all that is spoken. For even among men, if the Speaker be had in honour, his words will be received with heedfulness and attention. It is said of *Simon Magus*, that *all the people gave heed to him from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God: and to him they had regard, because that of long time hee had bewitched them with sorceries. Aēt. 8. 10.* Consider here: (1.) how this people were affected to *Simon Magus*, *They gave heed unto*

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unto him, and regarded him:
 (2.) why they thus observed and respected him, and that was, because hee had *bewitched them*, to beleeve that he was *the great power of God*, or one whom God had endued with great abilities from heaven. The like hereto we may find in our owne experience. For if we think highly of any mans vertues, and esteeme his words to have weight and worth in them: we heare them with attention, & embrace them as Oracles of great worth. And so, in this case, it is nothing but disesteeme of God and his word, that maketh men to neglect the word, when it is preached in their hearing. And therefore as

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Rabsakeh said, Heare yee the words of the great King, the King of Assyria. Isa. 36. 13. meaning, that because hee was a great King, therefore they should give good audience to his word: so, if wee consider that it is *the great King*, even the King of heaven, that speaketh unto us; it will command our attention, and make us heare with heed and observation. Let this then bee taken for a first benefit, that a due esteeme of God and his word, will cause attention in our hearing.

2. A due esteeme of God and his word, will make us willing to heare our faults reprovved, with *submission and patience*. Old Eli is an example

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example hereof. For when *Samuel* told him of his sinne in cockering of his sonnes, and of the judgement of God threatned against him for the same; he answered, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* 1, *Sam* 3.18. Wee may here observe, (1) *Eli* his willing submission to the reprehension of *Samuel*, *Let him do what seemeth him good*: and (2.) the reason, that made him so tractable and obedient, and that was, because *it was the Lord* who had sent that message. And so, if when wee come to heare a Sermon, we consider that it is God, who speaketh unto us by the mouth of a man, this will cause us with patience to heare our sinnes reprooved

reproved, and our selves censured for them.

3. The same consideration will make us to yeeld a ready *obedience* to the word, and to suffer our selves to be *moulded* and framed by it, when it prescribeth us a duty to bee done. This is so reasonable, that *Balaam* against his owne minde acknowledged it to bee right; *Must I not take heed* (saith he) *to speake that which the Lord hath put into my mouth?* Num. 23.12. And so, if we consider that it is God who speaketh, it will cause us to think our selves bound to do, what hee saith. For no Christian is so shamelesse, that will say, that hee will not do, what God doth command. And

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And therefore wee may observe, that when men are resolved not to obey, they will rather denie that it is Gods word that is brought unto them, then that it is their duty to obey his word. So the Jewes did; when *Jeremy* at their request had enquired of God for them, and told them in Gods Name, that they should abide in their owne Land, and not go into Egypt; they being resolved that it was more expedient for them, to go then to stay, told *Jeremy* to his face, *Thou speakest falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt, to sojourne there.* *Ier. 43. 2.* And so among us, no man that professeth to serve

serve the true GOD, will plainly denie submission to his word. The summe of all is, that if we bring with us; a due respect to God and his word, it will make us attentive, when wee heare; and *patient*, when we are reproved, and *obedient* when we are commanded that which is our duty to do.

[II.] The next thing, in which we are to shew reverence in the time of hearing, is a *dutifull behaviour* in the outward man. For even among men, if boies plaie the boies among their fellows, that is, if they bee waggish and bolde and presumptuous before their equals; no man will greatly regard it. But if they should

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do so before their Masters face, it were irreverence and rudenesse not to bee borne with. And we our selves in our owne houses, where we are among our equals and friends, may use that libertie both of speech and behaviour; which would savour of contempt and disrespect, if it were used in the presence of a Noble man, or of a Counsellor, or of a Prince. And so when we come into GODS presence; more sobernesse, and more modest and awfull behaviour will be required of us, then is necessary, when we are at home, or abroad among our neighbours. And therefore when wee come to heare God speaking unto

us;

us ; wee must have a care,
that wee do not by our ge-
sture , bewray an undutifull
respect to God or his ordi-
nances.

For better observing of
which duty , I shall point at
some such rules , as I find to
have beene either required
or observed amongst Gods
people : that out of them
every man may select such
directions , as may bee use-
full and expedient for him-
selfe.

I. First then , I finde in
Gods book , that when God
appeared to *Moses* , being
now to reveile his Law unto
him , he first of all comman-
ded him , *Draw not nigh hi-
ther ; put off thy shooes from
off thy feet : for the place*

F f 2 where-

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whereon thou standest, is holy ground. *Exod. 3. 5.* And so the Angeli, that appeared to *Ioshua* supposed to be Christ the second person in the Trinitie, commanded him; *Loose thy shooe from off thy foot: for the place whereon thou standest, is holy. Iosh. 5. 15.* Consider in these passages (1) what was required. And that was, it was required of *Moses*, that he should not come neare the place, where God appeared, but keep distance, like the *Publican*, who stood as farre off in the lowest part of the Temple. And secondly both *Moses* and *Ioshua* are commanded to put off their shooes. The meaning whereof (saith Calvin) is, to instruct and frame

Calceos
extuere
jubens
admirat
tunc &
metu ad
humilita
tē ipsum
erudit &
format.
Calvin.
in *Exod.*
3. 5. &
Ios. 5. 15

frame them to humilitie and an awfull feare. For as wee pull off the glove, when we salute our friends and take them by the hand, in token of our observance toward them; and as countrey people and servants, who go in pattons in the street, do in good maners put them off, when they come into a Citizens house of any note: so in those easterne countreys, where *Moses & Ioshua* dwelt, they were used to *put off their shooes*, in token of reverence and respect, when they came into place, where their betters were. And therefore, when GOD said to *Moses, Put off thy shooes*, he meant to teach him his duty towards his LORD; as we,

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when we bid a child *put off his hat, & make a legg*, do meane to teach him good maners towards his betters. (2.) We may consider in the Text, what the reason was, why this outward cariage was required at this time, and in this place: and that was, because the place was *holy ground*. But why were these places where *Moses* and *Ioshua* stood, more holy, then any other places in the countrey; especially seeing the one of them was in the desert, an untilled and ill ordered ground, and the other a place by Jericho, at that time a profane city of heathenish and idolatrous people? To this question the answer is, that the one-
ly

ly reason hereof was, because God appeared there, and shewed tokens of his presence. And hence wee have this observation, that wheresoever God is in any peculiar sort present, there the *place* is made *holy* by his presence; and where God doth so sanctifie a place, there we ought to declare our humilitie and dutifull respect by externall gestures of reverence, and by decent behaviour and carriage.

Secondly, I finde, that when God was to appeare on mount Sina, there to deliver the Law to his people; he first commanded to *sanctifie* them, and that they should *wash their clothes*.

Exod. 19. 10. The meaning

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of which ceremonie was, partly to admonish them of the purity of heart, required when wee come into Gods presence: & partly to teach them, that they ought to come decently & in a comely maner, lest they might shew neglect of his presence, if they came in a sluttish or unseemly sort. And therefore, as *Ioseph* when he was to go before *Pharaoh*, shaved himselfe, and put on other apparell: so wee ought to come into Gods presence in grave and comely attire, which may beseeme godlinesse, neither rudely like clownes, nor finically like wantons. A note not unfit to bee thought on by our sober maidens, who come both

both into Gods house, and unto Gods board, with bare breasts and naked armes and long locks, and such loose behaviour, as either becometh Ruffians alone, or no Christian at all.

Thirdly, I read of *Constantin* the Emperour, that being present in the Church, when *Eusebius* preached, he stood up all the while: and though hee were once and again intreated to sit down; he still refused it. The reason whereof was, because as himselfe said, [*Nefas est, institutis de Deo disputationibus, negligentes aures praebere.*] It is not lawfull, when things concerning G O D are in handling, to be negligent in hearing. And the like custom

*Euseb. de
vita Con-
stant. l. 4.
cap. 33.
pag. 400.*

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do I finde to have beene used by many others in ancient time : but neither was it observed generally by all, nor do I require it as necessary , of any. Onely thus much I observe , that holy and devout men , have been zelous to shew reverence in Gods service , by every behaviour that fitted the purpose.

Fourthly, I finde in some of the Learned , who prescribe rules of decency in the time of divine service, that they will not permit men, when they are hearing of Gods word to *smile* in secret , or to *looke about* , or to *laie one legg over an other*, or to *whisper in their fellows eare* , or to *look sowre* , as if
some

somewhat displeased them,
or to *leane and lie on one side,*
&c. And surely even in
these lesser things, there
is a decencie to be used in
our outward carriage; at lest
so farre, as that nothing
appeare, which may bewray
either dislike of the Prea-
cher, or disesteeme of God
and his word. And hence
we have two lessons.

1. A reproof for them,
who allow no outward ce-
remonies or religious ge-
stures in Gods service, lest
they should be superstitious
and Popish. There be men,
that dare not *kneele*, when
they receive the holy Sacra-
ment, nor *put off the hat*,
when they passe through a
Church, nor *kneele downe*
and

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Nigron.
in Reg.
commun.
2. nu. 57.
pag. 167.

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and make a *privat prayer* in a publik place : so that as the ancient worthies, upon all occasions expressed their inward devotion by outward gestures of reverence ; so these men take care, to shew how they detest superstition by avoyding all helps and expressions of religion.

2. Wee have hence a ground of exhortation for our selves : & it is this, that according to the rules of Scripture, which require reverence in the outward man ; & after the example of holy & godly men, who have observed those rules with diligence and zeale : we also, (as occasion shall bee offered) would shew our esteeme of
God

God and his word by seemly behaviour, and gestures of reverence and humility. Where notwithstanding, I will presse no mans conscience with a necessity of every expression used by the Ancients: because for the most part they are not simply necessary; but to be used with a kinde of freedome, and as occasion and reason shall require. Onely thus much I may boldly say, and (as I suppose) with the good leave of all that are well in their wits; that looke what modestie and signes of reverence we would use before a temporall Lord or Prince: so much at least is due to him who is *King of Kings, & Lord of Lords.* And
if

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if any will shew but a like reverence to God, that he would shew to his Prince, I will think him more devout, then most men among us are at this day.

3. The third and last duty, by which wee ought to shew reverence, is an awfull *quietnesse and silence* : which is, when neither by words nor deeds, we either trouble the presence, or hinder the work in hand. For by such behaviour as this, men use to shew their respect to their Betters. *Iob* saith of himselfe, while hee was in prosperity ; *The young men did see me, and hid themselves; the aged rose and stood up. The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hands on their mouth.*

mouth. The Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roose of their mouth. Job.

29. 8,9. And each man of discretion, if hee bee before them, whom he honoureth, will bee sparing of his speech, unlesse either the command of his Superiour, or the present occasion do require it. And still in the presence of his Betters, he is carefull lest by hard treading, or lowd speaking, or any noise making, he should breed disturbance, or seeme to neglect them. This, reason instructeth men to do in their conversing among men: and much more to do the like in holy Assemblies, where they have to deale with God. The Turks out of
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(a) Summo silentio verba præcuntis Sacerdotis excipiunt. Sic verò stabant immobiles, ut in illo seculo defixi, aut ibidem succrevissent viderentur. Nulla tussis, nullus screatus, nulla vox, nulla circumactio capitis aut respirantis motus. Sacerdote Mahometis nomine pronunciante, pariter unâ omnes capita ad genia usque submittebant, &c.

the common notions of reason, are very observant of this rule. *Busbequius*, a learned and wise Statesman who was Ambassadour in Turkie, for divers yeeres; telleth of the Turks, that they heard the priest reading their service, with great silence: — that they stood so unmoveable in their place, as if they had beene fastened in the ground: there was no coughing, nor no spitting, nor no voice, nor any either turning of the head, or looking back. When the priest pronounced the name of Mahomet, all of them at once bowed down their heads to their knees. When the name of God was spoken, they fell upon their faces, and kissed the ground. And in a word

word, they passe their service with great ceremony and attention. For if they do but scratch the head with a finger, they think all their devotion is lost. And that no man may think that this was a curiosity in those that beleeeve not: *Cassian* an ancient and learned Writer of the Church, doth relate the like rites and ceremonies of reverend behaviour to have beene used by religious Monks in his time. For speaking of a certaine Covent, wherein were diverse thousands together; he saith, that when they met at their solemne praiers, *(b) such was their silence and still behaviour, that in so innumerable a multitude, beside him who said the Service,*

no

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Euseb. ep. Tur.
3. pa. 265.

(b) Tantū a cunctis silentium præbatur ut quū in unū tam innumerosa fratrum multitudo conveniat, præter illud, qui cōsurgēs Psalmum decātū in medio, nullus hominū penitus adesse credatur: ac præcipuē quā cōsummatū oratio in qua non sputū emittitur, non exscreatio obstrepit, non tussis interfonas, non

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oscitatio
somnia-
lenta dif-
fusis ma-
lis & hi-
aneibus
trahitur,
&c. Cass.
Inst. li. 1.
cap. 10.
pag. 31.

no man seemed to bee present, and more especially in the concluding prayer, in which no man did spit, or hawk, or cough, or gape, or yawne, as one that were ready to sleepe. And if any man did chance to transgresse this rule of quietnesse and silence, they held him guilty two wayes: 1. [quòd orationis suæ reus sit, quòd eam videlicet negligenter offerat Deo] that hee forfeited the fruit of his prayer, because hee offered it up to God in a negligent manner: and (2.) [quòd indisciplinato strepitu, alterius quoque, qui forsitan intentius orare potuit, intercipit sensum] because by a rude and unmannerly noise, he did disturb the devotion of his fellow, who might have prayed
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with more fervour. This was the silent reverence, that was used in those dayes.

But, Lord, how unlike are our dayes to the former times? Men are now so farr from shewing such reverence to their God in his Service, that they forget all civilitie and good manners to their neighbours,. Men and women, I meane, who by clapping their Pew-doores, and sometimes by redoubling the knock, do so disturb the Assembly, that neither the Minister can be heard, nor the people proceed in their devotion. Beside, the maner of such uncivill people is, to come to Church, when service is halfe ended; (for they have
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more devotion to their beds than to their prayers :) and *indisciplinato strepitu* , with this *rude knocking* , they tell all the Congregation , that they come to serve G O D , when a great part of his service is ended. It is pitie, but some discipline were presently exercised on such men and women. If a child trouble the Congregation with crying, the Nurse carrieth him out of doores : if a dog disturb them with barking, the Sexton latheth him with a whipp : and if men and women , who ought to have more both discretion and religion, do in as rude a maner disturb Gods service, I see not why they should go away without correcti-

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on. But those, which are well minded toward God and his service, will I hope, upon this intimation amend it.

III. The third and last duty to be performed in the time of our hearing is to use wisdom for fitting that which is said, to our owne advantage. And for that purpose three rules are to be observed.

I. *Rule.* We must care for nothing in a Sermon, but that which may do us *good to salvation*. The proofes hereof are these.

I. *Proof.* The end of all preaching is the profiting of our soules in grace, and furthering them by grace towards eternall glory. For first

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first God himselfe, who is the Law-giver, professeth of himselfe; *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way, that thou shalt go.* Is. 48. 17. Hee meaneth, that the things which hee teacheth in his word are profitable; and if men would follow his direction, he would lead them in a way, that would bee for their good.

2. CHRIST our LORD, who is the great Prophet of the Church, he saith of himselfe also; *The Spirit of the Lord is upon mee; because hee hath anointed mee, to preach good tidings to the meek, hee hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaime libertie to the captives, &c. that they*

they may bee called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. Isa. 61. 1, &c. I note two things (1.) the matter of Christs Preaching, and that was, *good tidings, the binding up of the broken hearted, &c.* all which are things belonging to our redemption and salvation: and (2.) the end of his Preaching; and that was, that men might become *trees of righteousness, &c.* He meaneth, that like good trees they might bee fruitfull in good works, of holinesse, and upright living. All which implie a profiting in grace and obedience: 3. *Solomon* the wise preacher of *Israel*, saith, the summe and end of all his Preaching, and of mens
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hearing, is this, *Fear God and keepe his Commandements. Eccles. 12. 13.* 4. *Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, saith, that God sent him to the Gentiles, to open their eyes and to turne them from darknesse to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sinnes, and inheritance among them that are sanctified. &c. Act. 26. 17, 18.* And finally, to save labour in reciting of particulars, the Apostle hath told us in the generall, that God gave to his Church, *Apostles, and Prophets, and Evangelists, and Pastours, and Teachers: and all for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. Ephes. 4.*

11, 12. By this it appeareth that the end of all Preaching is the good of mens soules: and from hence it followeth, that therefore men in hearing the word preached, should seek nothing but that which may further their salvation.

2. *Proof.* It is a speciall propertie and vertue in Gods word, that it *begetteth* faith, and worketh grace, and doth help mens soules to salvation. S. Paul saith of it, that it is *the power of God to salvation. Rom. 1. 16.* Where hee doth not onely say, that it is usefull, but that it is *powerfull* to bring men to salvation. S. Iames saith, that *the ingrafted word is able to save our soules. Iames 1. 21.*

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where (1.) hee calleth it, *the ingrafted word*; meaning that the word must be rooted or fetled in our heart: and (2.) hee saith, that it is *able to save our soules*, if it be thus fetled within us. S. Peter also to the like purpose, *Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* 1. Pet. 2. 2. Where hee saith two things of Gods word, (1.) that it is like *milk*, to nourish Gods children in grace: and (2.) that if they desire and suck in this milk, it will make them to *grow* in goodnesse, till they become strong men in Christ. And to the like purpose it is also, that S. Peter said to his Master, *Thou hast the words of eternall life.* Ioh. 6.

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68: and that the Angel said to *Cornelius*, that *Peter* should tell him words, by which hee and all his house should bee saved. *Act. 11.14.*

And by this it appeareth, that the use and vertue of Gods word, is to work grace, and procure salvation: and hence also it followeth, that they who would make a right use of Gods word, must seek for grace and salvation by it.

Thus the truth of the rule is confirmed: and if it bee duly observed, it will rectifie two errours amongst us.

1. Their errour, who, so that their eares bee tickled, and their fancies pleased, do think they have gained enough by a Sermon. Of

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such men the Apostle did prophesie, when hee said; *The time will come, when men will not endure sound doctrine: but after their owne lusts shall heape unto themselves Teachers, having itching eares; and shall turne away their eares from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 2. Tim. 4. 3, 4.* In these words there are foure things said of these men. (1.) That they would not endure sound doctrine, *ὡς αὐτοῖς διδασκαλίαν*, that is, as the former Translation rendered it, *holesome doctrine*. By which word is implied, that as that is holesome meat, which breedeth good nourishment, and maintaineth health: so that is good doctrine, which nourisheth the soule,

soule, and preserveth it in spirituall health and vigour; but such doctrine these men *would not endure.* (2.) Hee saith of these men, that *after their owne lusts, they would heap unto themselves Teachers.* Hee meaneth they would delight in varietie, but of such onely, as pleased their owne palat. (3.) Hee saith, that these men would *have itching eares.* Hee meaneth, that as when the flesh itcheth, men take pleasure in having it rubbed: so these delighted in such speeches and doctrines as fitted their owne fantasies. (4.) He saith, that they would *turne away their eares from the truth.* He meaneth they were not contented with Gods word, so

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Luk. 4.
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as it is plainly delivered for their instruction; but so as it is devised by their owne Masters, & fancied by themselves. This the Apostle did fortell of the later times. Which prediction doth so suit with our times, that as our Saviour said of an other prophecie, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears:* so I may say of this prophecie, *In these daies is this Scripture fulfilled among us.* For now (if ever) is the time that men have *itching eares*, and *heap to themselves Teachers after their own lusts.* For some mens eares itch after Novelties and curiosities: & if the Preacher tell them of some outworne antiquities of elder times, or some pre-

present rarities in the new-found world, this will tickle them with delight; & please them like the *Athenians*, whose delight was to speak and heare news. And some mens eares itch after a curious phrase, and fine composed sentences, and pretty jirks of wit: and if a Preacher phrase it in good words, and flourish it in Rhetorik, and some turnings of wit; he is the man, that pleaseth to admiration. And some mens eares, do itch after controversies and questions of the time: and if the Preacher raile against that side, whom they dislike; that is melodie to their eares, and contentment to their minds. And lastly (to forbear no

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instances) there bee men, whose eares do itch after calumnies against the State, and reproches against our Church government; and if a Preacher shall gird at our Ceremonies, and glance at our Bishops, and crie out of Popish raggs and Reliques of Rome; this maketh their hearts to leap within them, & to honor that man above his rank and without reason. Though otherwise hee bee a lewd and scandalous liver, yet this one vertue, as they esteem it, shall cover all his other vices and sins. No sin can cast him out of these mens grace & favour; so he be true to the faction. But when all is done, if yee should ask any of these it-

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ching Hearers, what they have gained in godlines by the Sermon, which they so much commend; yee will finde, that they cannot give any account of any grace furthered in them, nor of any sin mastered or diminished, or of any thing else, by which they may be bettered towards salvatiō. Those that feare God, and desire their own comfort, let them hence take this rule with them, that whensoever they are pleased with any passage in a Sermon, they do presently ask their owne soules, wherein that passage hath or may profit them in obedience and a godly life: And if it no way further them towards heaven, it is no way

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worth their hearing or acceptance. It was an *itching eare*, & not a religious mind, that made them take pleasure in that passage.

2. This Rule duly observed will rectifie an other error, namely the error of them, who, if they finde their affections warmed and their zeale stirred up within them; though they cannot tell why or upon what ground, yet then they think they have made a good market that day. But this may prove a deceitfull fanſie, which had need to be corrected. For *Quintilian*, a man both wise and well experienced in things of this kinde, hath long since observed, that among Orators

tors, (and they were of like condition in the Commonwealth among them, that Preachers are now in the Church among us,) the unlearned were many times best esteemed: and he spendeth a whole (a) Chapter in discovering and setting downe the reasons of this erroneous opinion in the vulgar. S. Hierome also hath observed the like of Preachers in the Church, (b) *It is the fashion of unlearned men, (saith hee) by volubilitie of tongue, and celeritie in speaking, to raise an admiration of themselves amongst the rude mul-*

(a) Lib. 2. cap. 12. pag. 108.

(b) Verba volvere, & celeritate dicendi apud imperitum vulgus admirationem sui facere, indoctorum hominum est. At trita fides interpretatur,

tatur, scire, quod nescit; & quam aliis persuaserit, sibi quoque usurpat scientiam, &c. Nil tam facile, quam vile in plebeculam & indoctam Concionem linguæ volubilitate decipere, quæ quicquid non intelligit, plus miratur. Hieron. Epist. 2. ad Nepotian. pag. 16. Vide etiam Jul. Nigrinum in Regulam 2. commun. num. 67. &c. pag. 175.

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multitude. A bolde face will oftentimes teach that which himselfe doth not know; and when he hath perswaded others, hee usurpeth to himselfe the praise of learning.—Nor (saith hee) is there any thing more easie, then to deceive the baser sort and unlearned multitude with volubility of tongue. They when they understand not any point, do so much the more admire it. Nor is it any marvell, if the rude multitude do mistake in judging of a Preacher: they do so in matters that are more plain, and more neare to their capacitie and apprehension. Wee see it every day, that an horne-pipe or a morrice dance, and such countrey musick, doth please the

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common sort more then any exact and artificiall musick can do: & that those strokes & tunes, make them to leap, & frisk, which would make a sober and skilfull man to laugh and deride them. And so in this case; If a Preacher be furious in his action, and fluent in his words, and vehement in exclamations, and do mouthe it out with a throng of words, which are as unable to beget notions of true religion, as they are contrary to all rules of art and right reason: yet the multitude do greedily embrace this musick, & dance after this pipe. By all this I meane not to disable the gifts of any, nor to censure their forme of teaching, that
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may do good to Gods people. Onely I advise every wise Christian, not to esteem of a Sermon by the delight that himselfe or others of the vulgar sort, do take in the utterance of it. And I desire that instead thereof they will rather consider, what increase of godlinesse they have gained by it, or wherein they have been profited either for understanding of the Scriptures, and for conceiving of some point of religion, or for amending of their sinful life. If they give an account of such spirituall profit to their soules; I hinder not, but with great reason they may esteem such a forme of teaching. But if they can
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give no account of their profiting in godlinesse; I can give no approbation of their vaine censures.

2. *Rule.* The second rule which wisdometh requireth to be observed in the time of our hearing, is that wee select and single out such instructions, as do more especially concerne our owne practice: and take more speciall notice of them then of others that cōcern us not so nearly. For the mind of man is of a finite nature, & cannot observe all things with like exactnesse and attention: and our memories are feeble and fraile, and cannot treasure up every thing that is spoken. And therefore whatsoever ability and strength

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strength of minde and memory we have; wee should husband them in the best manner, and for our best advantage. And so wee shall do, if passing by things, that bee impertinent, and sliding through points of lesser moment; wee fasten our minds upon such lessons and observations, as do more nearely concerne our selves. In the use of this rule, the Prophet hath gone before us, and shewed us the way. Hee being to instruct the Priests in things of their duty, beginneth with this Preface; *And now, O yee priests, this commandment is for you. Mal. 2.1.* And so, if the Preacher tell Householders of their dutie to their

their sonnes and servants, he that is a master of a family, presently should say with himselfe, *This commandement is for mee*. And if the Preacher speake of the duty of servants to their masters; hee that is a servant, should say, *This commandement is for me*. And if hee insist on the duties of married Couples, the husband should say, *This commandement is for me*; and the wife should say, *That commandement is for me*. And if hee preach of true dealing in bargaining and contracts; the merchant, and the shop-keeper, and the Artificer, and the Customer, and every man almost may say, *That commandement is for mee*, and to
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me it belongeth. And in a word, every one, that heareth any rule, that concerneth himselfe, should make application of it to himselfe: that that which is his for the duty, may be his for the practice also. Thus wee see all sorts of men, that have care of their owne state, do use to do in things of this life without any teaching. If they heare of any medicine, that is proper for an infirmity of their owne; that they mark, and either imprint it in their memories, or write it up in a book of remembrance, for their after-use; when in the meanwhile they passe over many other better rules in their kinde, onely because they
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are not so proper for their case and condition. And againe, if a man reade the book of Statutes, and finde a Law which concerneth his owne Lands, or his owne dealings: he will either fold downe a leafe, or mark the place in the margin, or transcribe the words in a note-book; that it may be in readinesse, when the time serveth. And so, if in our hearing of the word either preached or read, we meet with any lesson or rule of life, that concerneth our selves in speciall, we should consider wherein and how it may stead us: and this consideration will bee as a mark set upon it, to keep it in remembrance. For if we should

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should forget the rule it selfe, yet the very application of it to our selves, will put us in minde of it. But as for other things, which are not usefull and proper for us, wee may passe them over with lesse care and attention. For example, if we heare some instruction, which wee had learned as fully before, wee may let that passe, as having no need of it. And if we heare somewhat not usefull for sanctification and a godly life; wee may let that go, as not worth the noting, when better things are in place. And if we heare good instructions that are usefull for others, but concerne not our selves; wee may dismiss them

them alſo, as not pertinent to our purpoſe.

In ſome ſuch manner as this, we may ſingle out ſuch leſſons as are proper, and paſſe by thoſe, which cannot further to a good life. And this condemneth the practice of two ſorts; (1.) of them that buſie themſelves about trifles, and things of no worth: and (2.) of them, who trouble themſelves about other mens duties, not pertinent to themſelves.

1. They are to bee condemned, who buſie themſelves about trifles or frivolous things; and by entertaining them do exclude things of better worth. Such are they, who are more affected with the Miniſters
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wearing of a cap, or a surplice, or an hood, then they are with their owne duty of obedience to Governours, and of just dealing with their neighbours, and of keeping the tongue from flandering and deriding of their betters. Such men, if they heare any word against a Ceremony, or against a Bishop; they mark and mind that, and clap hands at it for joy: when they can heare threatnings against hypocrisie, and selfe-love, and uncharitable censurings (sins too ordinary with such people) and yet are no whit mooved at the matter.

(a) *Plutarch* telleth of one, who being sick of a consumption, came to a (b) *Physician* to

(a) *Plutar.*
de Audit.
pag. 43.
(b) *Philos.*
lorimus.

to ask counsell for a sore finger: the Physician perceiving that he was dangerously ill of his consumption; answered, [*Non est tibi, amice, adversus reduviam opus medicinâ*] *My friend, you have no such need of physick for a finger: it is your lungs, that may endāger your life. And so I may say to these men, There is no such danger to your soules, from a Ministers surplice, or hood: Your danger is from your owne sinnes, your pride, and selfe-love, and overweening of your selves, with despising of your equalls, and slander-ring of your betters, &c. Cure these diseases first, and then we will heare you, if ye have any thing to say that*
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may discover a fault in our Ceremonies. The conclusion is; They that will profit by hearing Gods word, must single out such things, as may help to amend their lives.

2. They are justly condemned also, who busie themselves about impertinent matters: things which either concerne not themselves, or are above their reach and capacity to understand. In this sort *S. Peter* offended. Hee when our Lord told him, what conflicts himselfe was to undergo for his Master; presently, leaving his own businesse, enquired concerning *Iohn*, *Lord, what shall hee do?* But our Lord checked him for
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it: If I will that he tary till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou mee. Ioh. 21. 21, 22.

And such a one was he that would needs know, what God was a doing, before he made the world: to which busie question an ancient Father gave a wittie and wise answere, which was

[*Alta scrutantibus gehennas parabat,*] hee was making hell for them that prie into his secrets.

And such like were those Monks, of whom we read, that they asked Copres an holy and devout man, concerning *Melchizedech*, who and what he was: to whom Copres, [*tundens tertio os suum*] smiting himselfe three times on the mouth, said, [*Væ tibi Copre, &c.*] Woe to

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thee

August.
Conf. lib.
11. c. 12.
pag. 74.

Rosw. in
vitis Pa-
trum, lib.
5. cap. de
Humilit.
num. 24.
pag. 623.

thee Copres, which neglectest the things, which G O D hath commanded thee to doe; and searchest after those things, which he never required at thy hands. Hee meant by a figurative applying of their fault to himselfe, to tell them how dangerous it is, to be busie about unnecessary things. And so if any of us shall mark and enquire into the duties of other men; What the dutie of the King is in ruling of his people, what the Bishops in ordering of the Church, what the Ministers in preaching of the word, or what the Magistrats dutie is in doing of justice; wee may say to him, What is that to thee, who art a privat man? do thou

thou learn & do thine own duty, and let other men alone with their places, that concerne thee not. Againc, if any man shall busie himself about the orders of Angels, and the degrees of glory in heaven, and of the acquaintance that the Saints have, one with an other in an other world: wee may bid him first learn what God teacheth him for his salvation; & when he hath learned a'l that, then hee may have leave, to enquire about needlesse things.

3. *Rule.* The last rule of wisdom in our hearing is, that if any sin be reprov'd, or any judgment threatned, we should bee suspicious of our selves, lest wee may be

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the men : and in an holy jealousy , applie every thing to our selves , that reason will permit. For even in things of this life , *Salves* do not heale , unlesse they bee applied to the wound ; nor medicines do not cure , unlesse they be received by the Patient ; nor meat doth not nourish , unlesse it be taken downe into the stomach. And so it is here : Reprehensions and comminations and caveats against sin ; they do not humble the sinner , nor work repentance and warinesse , unlesse they bee applied to the diseased and crasie soule. This is apparent in the example of *David*. *Nathan* being sent to him to reprove him , he first told him

him a parable, and under it described his sin; but *David* passed over this, without once thinking on himselfe, who was aimed at in that speech. But when *Nathan* once had said, *Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD, &c.* then *David* remembered his fault, and said, *I have sinned against the LORD.* And so hee repented, and asked and obtained pardon. 2. *Sam.* 12. 1, &c. Thus it was with *David*: and so it is, and will be with us also. If sinnes be spoke against in generall onely, that worketh seldom times any remorse: but applie them to the conscience; and that worketh repentance & amendment of life. Appli-

cation then is most necessary. But it may not bee expected, that alwaies it should be done by the Preacher, as here it was done by the Prophet. For sometimes he can not do it, because he knoweth not the particular sins, whereof each man is guiltie, and to be admonished: and sometimes he may not do it; because, if hee should point out men in the pulpit, he might rather offend the Assembly, then amend the sinner; or, hee might shame him, rather then reforme him. Such applications by the Preacher may be usefull in privat, as *Nathans* was: but what good may come by personating men in publik, I cannot conceive.

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Seeing then that the Preacher cannot, or may not make this application: wise hearers must help him, and make the application themselves. If he tell them from the Apostle, *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge:* they, if any among them be privie to himself of this sin, must say within himsele, *I am the man*, that have sinned in this sort, & am guilty of that judgment. And if Hee preach against fraud and oppression, and presse upon them, that of the Apostle, *Let no man overreach or defraud his brother in any matter, because the LORD is the avenger of all such.* 1 Thes. 4. 6: they if guilty, should say, *I am the man*, and mine

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is that judgement. And if He preach against drunkenness and good fellowship, and tell of that threatening of the Prophet, *Wo to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue untill night, till the wine enflame the.* Isa. 5. 11: they should say each man for himselfe, I am the man: I have made the fault, and I deserve that wo. And so should wee do in all other the like cases: still help the Preacher, by bringing that home to our selves; which hee setteth before all his Hearers, that they may pick out that which they have need of.

Thus I have gone through the rules; every wise man
my

may make use of them, as
occasion serveth : and either
adde more of his own unto
them, or place others that
are better in their roome.
God grant us of his grace,
that wee may conscionably
use all such helps, as he doth
prescribe us for our spiritual
good : that by them, & his
grace accompanying them,
we may in the end attaine
to his glory. *Amen.*



CAP. XIV.

*Duties to bee performed after
our hearing.*

HAVING hitherto spoken of the two first sorts of duties; I come now to the third, namely duties required after our hearing is ended. And for this purpose I have not many rules to insist upon: this one shall suffice.

Hee that will profit by a Sermon, shall do well, after the Sermon is ended, to *call to mind* what he hath heard, & then to consider of things more distinctly and with more leasure. For in the time of our hearing, because our
mindes

minde must go along with the Preachers tongue, wee want time to pause and consider and weigh what wee heare: the most that we can do, is but to think and consider, which of the things delivered, may bee fit for our use. The hammering and the fitting of them, is left for afterward, when we may have more time to sift and examine them more exactly. This course wise men use to observe in other the like cases. When they read things in haste, they folde down a leaf or make a mark in the margin of the book, that they may read the place over againe at more leisure: & when the time & occasion serveth, they consider of those

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those remarkable passages. And so after we have heard the word preached or read, and have marked out for our selves, those which seemed the most usefull sayings : it will bee profitable, to take a time to think on them againe in our privat houses. This the Learned think was resembled by that of *Moses* his Law, where those beasts, are onely allowed for cleane beasts, which did chew the cudd.

(a) Auditor verbi
similis
esse debet
animalibus,
quæ ob
hoc, quia
ruminant,
munda
esse dicuntur.
Prosper.
sentent. ex
August.
nu. 193.

Levit. 11. 3. So (a) *Prosper*,
The Hearer of G O D S word
ought to be like to those beasts,
which because they chew
the cudd, are therefore said
to bee cleane. And like unto
such beasts good Hearers
are in two things. 1. Because,

(b) as

(b) as those beasts, while they eat, do let downe into the maw, the meat half chewed; and after they have done eating, do draw it up againe into the mouth, and grinde and chew it better: so men must first heare, and afterward recall and consider what they have heard: the first whereof is like the first eating of the meat, and the later is like the chewing of the cudd. Secondly, good Hearers are like such beasts, because, as the beasts, which ruminat or chew the cudd, are reckoned for cleane beasts; so GOD doth approve and allow those men, which

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(b) Quā audit, fit similis edenti; quum vero audita in memoriam revocat, fit similis ruminanti. Prosp. ibid. and. In ipsa ruminatione, in qua significat Deus munda animalia, hoc voluit insinuare, quia omnis homo, qui audit, sic debet in cor mittere, ut nō piger sit ea cogitare: ut quando

audit, similis sit manducanti; quum autem audita in memoriam revocat, & cogitatione dulcissimā recolat, fiat similis ruminanti. Ruffin. in Psal. 45. in fine, pag. 107. Vide Chrys. hom. 21. ad populum Antioch. in principio, pag. 263.

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which first heare, and then ruminat and consider what they have heard. This practice is further proved to be good, 1. from grounds of Scripture, and 2. from the benefit which we may reap by it.

I. From grounds of Scripture. For in them we finde, that after *S. Paul* had given instructions to *Timothy* concerning his duty, he addeth for conclusion, *Meditate on these things. 1. Tim. 4.15. & Consider, what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. 2. Tim 2.7.* And so *David* often professeth of himselfe, that his practice was to meditate on Gods word. *Psal. 119.15,23,48,78,148:* and setteth it down

as

as a note of a blessed man, that hee doth *meditate in the Law of the Lord*. In like sort it is said of the blessed Virgin, that *shee kept all the things* that were spoken to her by the Shepherds, and *pondered them in her heart*. Luk. 2. 19: and ver. 51. after our Saviours disputing with the Doctors, and his answer concerning the doing of his Fathers *businesse*; it is said, that she *kept all these sayings in her heart*: Meaning, that shee noted and marked them, when they were spoken, and afterward laid all together, & considered the purpose of God in them for mans salvation. By all this wee see, that holy men of God have not contented

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tented themselves with bare hearing & reading of Gods word; but have *meditated* and considered of it afterward with more leisure. Now of all the times that may be imployed about this service, none is more fit, then within a little while after our hearing. And this time is therefore most usefull; partly, because the memory is then most fresh, and best able to give an account of what hath beene heard; and partly, because present meditation and consideration, will both confirme the memory, and prepare the heart for performance in the time to come.

II. There is much benefit to bee reaped by this pra-

practice. For,

1. It will better our *knowledge*, and make us to understand things more fully and perfectly. For in hearing, many things escape us through haste, which afterward may bee observed and understood in our second and more serious thoughts. For example, in our hearing, while we mind the particulars in severall, the dependance and connexion of the parts, do many times overslip us, which upon a second review (especially time of consideration being allowed thereto) we may easily discern; and thereby understand the whole discourse more distinctly and fully. 2. In the Sermon or
in

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in the Chapter read, there may happen some hard words, and dark sentences, and deepe reasons; which on the sudden wee cannot, but with a little labour and meditation, we may apprehend and discover. 3. There are in every Sermon lightly some testimonies of Scripture, and some arguments from nature and reason, the soundnesse or emptinesse whereof appeare not for the present. For light reasons set foorth with fine words, and a gracefull delivery, do at the first please, yea, transport a vulgar Hearer: whereas if they were turned out of their Rhetoricall coat, and shewed in their naturall feature, (as in the rehearsing of them

them by the Hearers, they will be ;) then the vanity of them will bewray it selfe. And so on the contrary, many a sound argument, or solid reason, mooueth not the hearers, when it is delivered ; because they cannot on the sudden dive into the depth of it ; which by after thoughts they may understand. From whence it is, that some mens Sermons, seeme better in the repetition, then they did at the first hearing ; because now they are better understood, then they were before. In these respects , whosoever shall imitate the commendable example of the Bereans, who when *Paul* had ended his Sermon, *searched the*
Scrip-

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Scriptures, weighed the allegations, considered the circumstances, and marked how every thing was proved and confirmed: that man will gaine both an increase of his knowledge, and a confirmation of his faith, as the Bereans did; especially if he meet with a solid Preacher, such as *Paul* was. Let this then bee the first benefit of *recalling*, what we have heard; it furthereth our knowledge and understanding.

2. The second is, that it will be an help to our *memorie*, fastening and imprinting therein, the lessons that were delivered. And this it will do, for these causes, and in these respects.

(1.) The

(1.) The repeating of what we have heard, is a second presenting to our minds of those lessons and instructions which we have heard : and the oftener they be presented to the minde, the better they will bee fastened in the memory; every act of the understanding working upon the memory also. And therefore, as the second blow driveth the naile deeper then the first did; so this second representing of things to the minde, and by the minde to the memory, will keep a better remembrance of what we haue learned.

(2.) The memory is hereby helped also, because in the first hearing the materiall

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riall points, were clothed & covered (as wee may say) with many words of amplification and enlargement : which though they had their use for moving of affections, yet are some hinderance to the memorie, which is lesse able to treasure up necessary points, when they are cumbred with so many circumstances. But in our after-thoughts, when wee consider againe what wee have heard, wee may single out the bare matter from the Rhetorick, and lay the necessary points by themselves alone : and then they will not onely be contracted into a narrower roome, more easie for the memorie ; but besides, each thing

thing will appeare in its due order and place, which will help the memory to remember that, which otherwise it would have forgotten. For if it should forget the particulars, taken severally and apart, yet the very dependance and connexion that one thing hath with another, will help to bring all to remembrance. For conclusion of this reason, I consider that sentence of the Apostle; *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest at any time wee should let them slip. Heb. 2.1.* In these words, these things are considerable for our purpose. (1.) When he saith, *We must give earnest heed*, he meaneth that

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that wee must meditate and consider with diligence and care. (2.) When hee saith, we must give heed *to the things which wee have heard*, he implieth, that this intention of minde, and this heed that is required, is a thing that followeth after our hearing. We must [now] give heed to the things, which we have [formerly] heard. (3.) When hee saith, Wee must give heed, *lest wee let them slip*: hee intimateth, that if we do not afterward heed what before we heard, we may quickly like leaking vessels, let all runne out that hath beene powred into us. And therefore, as I said before, that *Attention* in hearing, is like the plough that openeth

openeth the ground for receiving in of the seed : so now I may as truly say , that *Meditation* and recalling of what wee have heard , is like the Harrow , which breaketh the clods , and covereth the seed sown , that it may bee kept from the fowles of the aire , that would eat it up. Thus this ruminating of what we have heard , helpeth to confirme the *memorie* : and remembrance is so necessary for our profiting by the word ; that without it all is lost , that was gained by our hearing. He that forgetteth what he hath heard , is like a man , that *earneth wages* , and *putteth them into a broken bagge* : or like one with a weak sto-

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mach, who casteth up his meat, as soone as hee hath taken it in: that is, all of them take paines without profit; because they keep not what they have gotten. The conclusion is, if wee meane to profit by our hearing, wee must recall what we have heard.

Ob. But some perhaps will say, that their memories are *fraile*, and they cannot call to minde that which they have heard: when they be-think themselves of the Sermon, they can remember nothing, or nothing to any purpose, that the Preacher did say.

Ans. To these men I have three things to say.

(1.) That men & women
most

most times do laie the blame upon their memories, when indeed the fault is in their own *negligence* and carelesse-
nesse. For even those men, who complaine of weak memories, yet when they have made a bargaine, can relate all the passages; and if they heare a plaie or an enterlude, they can tell by heart the merie jests contained in it; & if ye tell them a story of their forefathers kinred, and their noble descent, this they can repeat over with readinesse and perfect memory; and if ye should direct them to a treasure, that laie hid in a field, they would neither forget the place, nor the way that lea-
deth to it. Only, when they

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heare instructions concerning heaven and salvation, Here their memories faile them : and they can remember nothing. And what can bee the reason hereof, but that their care of heaven is lesse then their care of the world? *Tullie*, when some objected, that olde age was forgetfull, answered, [*Omnia quæ curant, senes meminērunt*,] *Olde men do remember al that they care for*: never did any of them forget, where he laied his money, or what bargaine hee had made. And so I may say of these men, [*Omnia quæ curant, meminērunt*,] they do not forget any thing that they care for: their money, their bargains, their pleasures; these

these things they can remember, and if they forget the instructions of GODS word alone, it is a shrewd argument, that they care but a little for them. Let them amend their affection to godlinesse and Gods service, and then their memories will everie day grow better, and will bee as able to remember the things of God, as now they are to remember the things of the world.

(2.) I say, It is true, that all mens memories are not alike good. For some mens memories are ill disposed by nature, others are weakened by sicknesse or olde age, & others are deaded through intemperance and ill diet.

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And if any man be disabled by these or any other accident, so that indeed hee cannot remember, what he doth heare; I must needs say that man wanteth a great help to godlinesse, which others do enjoy. But yet notwithstanding, if he do his endeavour, both for the helping of his memorie, and for recalling to minde, that which hee hath heard; hee may comfort himself in this, that our God, whom wee serve, is gracious, and will not require more of his servants, then hee hath made them able to performe. But as the Apostle said of liberallitie, and almsdeeds, *If there be a willing minde, it is accepted according to that which a*
man

after our hearing.

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man hath, and not according to that which hee hath not.
2 Cor. 8. 12: So it is true of all duties and good performances; if there be a *willing minde* so that we performe what we are able to do, God accepteth of our endeavours, though they be weak and poore in the performance. And therefore he or she who complaineth of a weak memorie, should first take care, that the defect be not in his own negligence or disorderly carriage; as namely, because hee did not attend, when hee did heare; or because hee doth not rubb up his memorie, and call it to account, after he hath heard; or because hee did or doth entertaine idle thoughts of

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by-businesſes , when hee ſhould minde the inſtructions that were given him. And if the defect be not in himſelfe , hee may comfort himſelfe in GODS mercie , which is not denied to them , who endeavour to ſerve God in ſinceritie and truth.

(3.) I ſay , It may be that a tender conſcience may in this caſe think worſe of himſelf , then there is cauſe. For perhaps he remembreth not the words , but hee can remember the matter , and ſpeak of it in a ruder phraſe of his owne ; or perhaps he cannot remember any orderly proceſſe concerning the matter , but yet he can tell , that ſuch a ſin was condemned,

demned, and such a duty
enjoynd, by which he is
perswaded to serve GOD
better; or perhaps againe,
when he beginneth to think,
nothing will come to his
minde, & yet if one should
question him concerning
this or that point handled
in the Sermon, or, if him-
selfe should have occasion
to practice it in his course of
life; he could then call to
minde, that he had heard it
and can tell now how to
make use of it. And if there
be but thus much, it is not
to be accounted as nothing.
Tender consciences, who
disquiet themselves with
feares for their disabilitie of
memorie, may consider of
a storie related in the lifes

(a) Quidā frater dixit ad Senem; Ecce Abba, frequenter interrogo seniores Patres ut dicāt mihi cōmōtionem pro salute animæ meæ, & quicquid dixerunt mihi, nihil retineō. Erāt autē Seni duo vasa vacua; & dixit ei Senex, Vade & affer unū ex illis vasis, & mītte aquā, & lava illud, & effūde, & pone

nīdā in locum suū. (b) Quale est ex utrisque mundus? Respondit frater, Ubi aquam misi & lavi. Tunc Senex dixit ei, Sic est & anima, fili, quæ frequenter audit verba Dei: quamvis nihil retineat ex his quæ interrogat, tamen plus mundatur, quā illa, quæ non requirit. Rosw. de vitis Patrum, lib. 3. num. 178. pag. 526.

of the old Fathers. (a) The storie is this; *One of the fraternitie* came to the old Father; and, Father, said he, *I do often desire of the ancient fathers some instruction for the good of my soule, and what soever they tell me, I forget all.* The olde man had two emptie vessels, and bade him bring the one, and powre water into it, and wash it cleane, and then powre out the water, and set it up cleane in its place. Which when the young man had done accordingly, hee demanded, (b) *Which now of the two vessels is the more cleane?* The yong man answered

red, that into which I poured
water, and washed it. And
then the old father replied, So,
my son, is the soule which of-
tentimes heareth Gods word:
though it remember not, what
it hath heard, yet it is more
cleansed from sin, then that
soule that never came to heare
at all. And so, if any man or
woman among us have a
weak memorie, and cannot
give so good an account of
a Sermon, as others can do;
they must doe their ende-
vour to amend their imper-
fections, and if still they
come short and faile of their
desire, yet they may com-
fort themselves with this
thought, that all is not quite
lost, but somewhat sticketh
in the minde, which though
it

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it appear not at the present, yet may do them good for afterward; as the vessel, into which the water was powdered, was cleaner & moister, then that which stood drie, without any water powdered into it at all. The conclusion of this point is, Let men do their hearty endeavour, and not frame excuses of weakness, when it is their owne idlenesse and want of affection to the work: and then I dare say, that no mans or womans memorie is so bad, but though they cannot make any orderly repetition of their hearing, yet somewhat is laied up in them, which when occasion is offered, will shew itself, and may direct them
by

by a holy life to eternall glory. And thus much for the second benefit, which is the *helping of memory* or remembrance.

3. A third is, Our recalling to minde after Sermon, what we heard in the Sermon-time, will bee a meanes to better our *judgment*, and will enable us to see, what passages are useful and profitable for a godly life. For if wee think, that every passage in a Sermon doth alike profit us, as it doth please us, wee greatly deceive our selves. For in common experience we see, that fine and well shaped clothes, put upon a misshapen body do make him seeme more handsome to

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a vulgar eie, then the comeliest man, that is clothed in rags. And so elegancie of phrase, and cadencie of sentences, and lively expressions of the minde, especially being graced with comeliness of gesture also (which things are the ornaments and the attire of a Sermon;) do usually more cary away the eares and hearts of the vulgar, then sound rules and solid reasons possibly can do. But now, if a man would know, which of the two is the more personable and better proportioned man, hee must strip them both out of their clothes, and then hee shall see them such as indeed they be. And so, if our Hearers would know

know what is solid and substantiall in our Sermons, they must turne them out of their attire of utterance and eloquence: and then they may see what profitable notes they containe, that may further a godly life. If there be any thing that may serve either to reforme our manners, or to make us wiser to salvation: that is sound doctrine. But all other words or things, that some way or other further not this end, they are either but empty shews, or at the best but externall ornaments. And if thus men desire to trie and examine the goodnesse of a Sermon; nothing is more fit for that purpose, then is Repetition
and

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and after-consideration of what wee have heard. For then and at such a time, the matter and substance of doctrines debated, will offer themselves with ease to a faithfull memorie; when the outward ornaments of eloquence and gesture will faile us, do what wee can. And so, hereby we shall bee enabled to see each limme, and each joint, and each sinew of a Sermon, in its native and proper shape; so our selves bee carefull to view and consider the parts thus dissected, and presented to the view.

Object. But some perhaps will say. What? and do yee then condemne or debase eloquence and action, the grace.

gracefull vertues of an Oration?

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Answer. I answered no, in no wise. I commend them and reckon them as gracefull ornaments, that serve to beautifie true doctrine, as I would commend handsome clothes that adorne a mans body. For as comely clothes put upon a well-favoured person, do make him more lovely and amiable to the Beholders; so eloquence and utterance, when they do attend and wait upon sound doctrine, do commend it to the Hearers, and may induce them to embrace it. This I acknowledge, as to be true, so to be a great vertue in a Sermon. But yet I would have men
wise

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wise to distinguish between the clothes and the person of a man; or else they cannot discern his ability for each service. And so, much rather do I desire that Christians should put a difference between substance of doctrine and ornament of speech, the one being that which putteth life of grace into his actions, and the other onely that which may moove him to go on the faster in his way. The conclusion is, If any would judge throughly of a Sermon, hee must do by it, as the *Lacedemonian* did by the *Nightingale*. Hee having caught the bird alive, thought hee had gotten a fine dish of meat, but when hee had stript her out

after our hearing.

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out of her feathers, he found
a bare and a leane carcase:
and then hee gave this ver-
dict of her [*Vox es, & prater-
ea nihil,*] Thou hast a *sweet*
voice for singing, but no
meat to satisfie hunger. And
so, when the feathers are
pulled off, it may be discer-
ned whether in a sweet tu-
ned Sermon there bee any
thing else, beside a pleasant
voice. And thus I have done
with this duty of recount-
ing usefull things after our
hearing.

Plurarah.
Apoph.
Lacon.

C A P.



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Generall duties requisit at all times, both before and after, and in the time of our hearing.

THUS I have run through the particular duties in right Hearing, in the severall parts and sorts of them, *before, and after, and in the time of Hearing*: there remaineth onely now to be considered the last sort, which is of *generall Duties*, diffusing themselves through all those differences of time. And in this kinde there are three duties to be observed.

I. The

I. The first is, that we be
reall, and *substantiall*, in all
our performances, and not
any where, *perfunctory* or
formall; when wee have to
deale with God, an outside
will not serve the turne: he
requireth the heart, and will
accept of no service, which
is not sincere and hearty.
And that our services in this
businesse may bee such, wee
must observe two rules.

I. *Rule.* Wee must not
think it inough to do the
outward works, wee must
joine true & hearty *affection*
with them. For all outward
acts, are but as the shell, or
the rinde, which covereth
and preserveth the fruit
from violence and harme:
the inward affection of the
soule

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oule, that is the kernell and the fruit of devotion. Now the shell and rinde though they bee of good use, while they inclose the fruit, yet are they vaine, and of no worth or moment. when they are separated from it, and stand alone by themselves. And so it is with acts of Gods service : if they be joyned with inward affections of the heart, they both serve to expresse a godly zeale and to increase it : but if they bee disjoyned from hearty affections, they serve for no more use, then an empty shell and the bare parings of an apple : that is, for nothing but either for the fire or the dunghill. From hence it is that our Saviour

viour condemneth the verball prayers of the Heathen. *When yee pray (saith he) use not vaine repetitions, as the Heathen do: for they think they shall bee heard for their much speaking. Matt. 6.7.* In which words, our LORD setteth out the vicious prayers of the Heathen by two things: (1.) by their *superfluity* of words: and (2.) by their *vacuitie* of matter. Their *superfluitie* of words was, that they used much speaking and vaine repetitions; that is, they prayed at length, while words were at hand; & whē new words failed thē, they went over their prayers againe. (2.) their *vacuity* or emptines of matter in these many words, is described

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described two wayes. (1.) In that it is said, they used *vaine repetitions*. The word in the originall is βαττολογειν, that is, to *speake as Battus* did: and his manner of speech is set out by the Poet to bee this: when one asked whether any cattell were driven that way, *Battus* in the Poet is said to make answer, that there were, and [*sub illis Montibus, inquit, erant, & erat sub montibus illis*] they went under those mountaines, and under those mountaines they went; idly repeating, what before hee had said, which was foolish in the Speaker, and tedious to the Hearer. (2.) The *emptinesse* of matter in those prayers is set out by another word, not much

much unlike to the former ;
 πολυλογία, which in English is
 word for word, *much speaking*,
 and in the sense importeth many words to small
 purpose. For if a man continue his speech long, as *Paul*
 did, when hee continued till
midnight. Act. 20. 7, 9 : yet, if
 hee speak materially and to
 purpose, hee is not to be
 esteemed πολυλογος, a man of
many words : then onely is
 a man said to use many
 words, when the words are
 moe, then the matter doth
 require. And therefore the
 former Translation did render
 the place not unfitly,
 when it said, *They think to*
bee heard for their much bab-
ling. The fault then taxed
 in these Heathens was, that

K k they

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they used *emptie* words without matter and affection answerable thereunto. And so it will bee our fault, if we *pray* without feeling, and *heare* without attending; or, if we turne our Bibles, and *repeat* Sermons without care to profit in godlinesse by them.

2. *Rule.* In duties of hearing, and repeating, and conferring, we must not rest in the present work, or the *transient act* of these duties; as if we performed a service to God, because wee *heare*, and *rebearse*, and talk of a Sermon: but wee must refferre all to future practice, and esteeme them onely so farre forth good, as they make us better; either wiser
in

in our knowledge, or holier
in our obedience. And there-
fore it is, that the Prophet
describing the nature of
right hearing, saith, *Who a-
mong you will give eare to
this? who will hearken and
beare for the time to come?*
In which words, (1.) when
he saith, *who will giue eare,*
and *who will hearken?* hee
implieth that all should, but
yet few do so; and (2.)
when he saith, *who will beare
for the time to come?* hee
meaneth that men should
not content themselves with
the transient action of hea-
ring, which continueth no
longer, then while the sound
lasteth; but they must so
beare for the present, that it
may serve for afterward:

Isa. 43. 23

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namely, that they think on it, and consider of it, and put it in practice as occasion shall require. This is to *heare for afterward*: but if any, while he heareth, have some warme affections kindled in him, and after hee is gone, think no more on it, or amendeth not his life by it; this man heareth onely for the present, and doth not answere Gods expectation, when hee saith, *who will heare for the time to come*? And so in like sort, if a man note Sermons with his pen, and repeat them afterward with his familie, and yet for most part insisteth upon empty words and idle allegations, which doe not profit him or them in godlines, and

and neglecteth those notes, which might make them better: this mans writing and repeating are both alike of no value. But if further any shall abuse these holy exercises to countenance their factious meetings, and instead of meditating on Gods word, do devise flanders against Gods Church; these men turne duties of religion into occasions of sinne. Let not my pen ever speak any word for encouragement in such an evill practice. The summe of all is, that if wee will proove our selves to bee good Hearers of Gods word, we must so heare, and so repeat, and so performe every duty required in this work; as that

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all of them may further us in Gods service and an holy life.

II. The second *generall* duty is, that together with our owne endeavours and performances, wee joyne *prayer* to God for his blessing upon the work that we go about. For as *David* said in a like case, *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it; and, except the Lord keepe the City, the watchman waketh but in vaine. Psal. 127.1*: so, except God assist us with his grace, wee shall prepare our selves in vaine, and heare Gods word in vaine, and what wee have heard, wee shall repeat in vaine: and nothing that wee go about, either

either before, or after, or while we heare; can prosper, unlesse God give the blessing, and make it to prosper. Now the blessing of God is to bee sought and obtained by prayer. S. *James* his direction is, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall bee given him. Jam. I. 5.* In this Scripture, wee have first a precept, directing us to our duty, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God:* and secondly a promise, assuring us of successe, *and it shall bee given him:* and thirdly, a reason drawn from Gods nature, *Hee giveth liberally to all, and hee upbraideth no man with his gifts;* and there-

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*Col. 10.
cap. 10.

fore he will be ready to give us that which we want, if we beg it of him in our prayers. And so, if any man lack (and who lacketh not?) either a prepared minde before hearing, or due attention in the time of hearing, or a firme memory after hearing, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally: and he needs not doubt but God will give what he doth ask according to Gods will. Upon this ground **Cassian* an ancient & Learned Writer, adviseth men, upon every occasion to make use of that praier of *David*, [*Deus in adiutorium meum intende: Domine, ad iuvandum me festina.*] O GOD make speed to save me: O LORD make haste to

to helpe mee. Psal. 70. I. For this praier fitteth every condition of man, as he declareth in many particulars, the summe whereof may bee this. If a man be in any distresse or danger, then hee should say, Deus in adiutorium, &c. O God make speed to save mee: O Lord make haste to helpe me. And if hee be sollicitated by any temptation, then he should pray, O God make speed to save me, &c. And if he want any grace or blessing, then he should pray, O God, make speed to save me, &c. And if hee have obtained any blessing or favor from God; for the continuance of that mercie; and his right using of it, hee should pray, O God make speed to save mee;

Kk 5 O Lord

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O Lord make haste to helpe me.
And what soever the occasion bee, still this praier will bee seasonable and usefull. Thus this holy man teacheth us, how to observe that rule of the Apostle, *Pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. 5. 17.* This direction is applicable to this purpose. When we are preparing to heare GODS word, we should pray God, that hee will prepare our hearts, and fit us for that service; when wee are busied in the act of hearing, we should pray, that GOD will direct us to lay hold on that which we finde usefull for us; & after our hearing, we should pray, that GOD will blesse our memories, to keepe the good lessons,
which

which we have heard. This
to bee a laudable custome,
still to begg a blessing of
God upon every endeavour
of ours; no man, I suppose,
will denie: onely perhaps
some man may doubt, how
a man may pray in the time
of his hearing, without hin-
dering or interrupting the
publik and enjoyned exer-
cise, then certainly more
necessary, then any privat
prayers or devotions. To
this my answer is, that the
Scripture it selfe, doth suf-
ficiently direct us herein.
There we read, that *Nebe-
miah*, when the King was
talking and conferring with
him, about the affaires of
his people, and the state
of the holy Land; yet saith
of

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of himſelfe, So I prayed to the God of Heaven: and I ſaid to the King; If it pleaſe the King, &c. Neh. 2.4,5. By this wee ſee that *Nehemiah* at the ſame time did both pray God for a bleſſing, and continue his ſpeech with the King: which ſheweth, that while hee was talking with the King about thoſe weightie affaires of the Church, he darted up a jaculatory ſhort prayer unto God, either that hee would direct the Kings heart for the good of his people, or that he would proſper the buſineſſe in hand, or ſome ſuch prayer to the like purpoſe. And hence wee have direction in this caſe. When we heare an uſefull point, that

that concerneth us much,
wee may by a short prayer,
desire Gods blessing upon it, for
our good, without hindering
or diverting away our at-
tention from any part of
the Sermon. For example,
if the Preacher commend
any necessary duty unto us,
we may pray for grace, to
perform it: if he condemne
any sin, by which we may
be ensnared, we may pray
for strength to avoid it: and
if hee dispute of any hard
point, which is profitable to
be knowen, wee may pray
for wisdom to understand
it. And all this wee may do
without any hinderance to
the publick service or the
exercise in hand. Nay, if
we do thus at convenient
times,

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times, and when the occasion doth require it; it will further us in that work two waies: (1.) it will obtaine a blessing of GOD upon the present work, that it may do us the more good: and (2.) it will season our hearts with holy affections, and thereby prepare them for the performing of what they have beene taught. Prayer then is usefull at all times, both before we come to heare, and when wee are in hearing, and after we have made an end of the work: and therefore my exhortation shall be that of the Apostle, *Pray without ceasing*; and that of our Saviour where hee saith, that men ought alwayes to pray.

1. Theff.
5. 17.

Luk. 18. 1.

For

For our better encouragement in which duty, wee may consider the successe and event thereof, in two known examples. The first is the example of *Cornelius*, of whom it is said, that *while hee was praying in his house, an Angel from heaven appeared unto him, and directed him to Peter, who would tell him what hee ought to do.* *Act. 10. 6:* or, as it is *Act. 11. 14.* *would tell him words, whereby both hee and all his house should be saved.* Another example wee have in *Saul*, afterward called *Paul*: Of whom wee reade, that after *J E S U S* had appeared unto him by the way, and preached unto him the sum of the Gospel, *hee went into*
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the City, and continued three dayes fasting and praying: And then the Lord appeared to Ananias and said, Arise—and inquire in the house of Iudas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for behold he prayeth. Act. 9. 11. Where (1.) wee may note a commandement given to Ananias; Arise, go, enquire for Saul: it is a short speech including more in the sense, then appeareth in the words. Hee meaneth, that hee should inquire for him, and having found him, should say and do unto him as afterward is expressed ver. 17. (2.) a reason, which moved God to bestow these favours upon him, and that is in these words; For behold,

hold, he prayeth. If Saul had gone his way, and neglected the vision that hee saw, and the words that hee heard from our Saviours mouth, hee might have continued without any further direction and help. But now that hee prayed to God after the vision and the instructions of our LORD; (a) God sendeth his servant, who both *opened his eyes*, and instructed him in the faith, and *baptized him*, and *layed his hands upon him*; and *hee was filled with the holy Ghost*. The application from these examples to our selves is this: If we set our selves to *prayer* before hearing, as *Cornelius* did; and by *prayer* beg Gods blessing after we have heard;
as

(a) A&.
9. 17. and
A&. 11.
14, 15, 16

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(b) Eph.

2.4.

(c) Psal.

65.2.

as *Saul* did; wee may hope, that God (*b*) who is *rich in mercy*, and such a one (*c*) as *heareth prayer*, will blesse our endeavours, and prosper his ordinance, and send us such Teachers, as may direct us the right way to salvation and life.

III. The last *generall* duty is, that wee bee constant in our performances, whether they be to bee used before, or after, or amidst our hearing. And by constancie in our duties, I meane two things: (1.) that wee must not do them by spurts: and (2.) that wee must not do them by halves. 1. We must not do them by *spurts* onely, and when the toy taketh us; but wee must per-
forme

forme them usually at the accustomed and convenient times. For those that come to Church now and then, at their best leisure, and now and then prepare themselves, and now and then recall to minde what they have heard; are like trewandly boies, which come to schoole one day, and stay away another. Among such schollars, I have seldome seene any, that ever learned his book to any purpose. And no marvell. For first he loseth a great part of the time in idlenesse, which others bestow at their book, and misseth many lessons, which his fellows do learne in his absence. 2. Such a trewandly boy is not disposed

fed to learne, when he cometh to schoole; partly because his minde is upon his miching holes, where hee useth to lurk, or upon the pastime that hee hath spent his time in: and partly, because the losing of his ordinary lessons in his absence, doth rob him of much help, that hee might have gained for the lessons which come after. For one lesson well learned, is a stepp and introduction to another; because there is a connexion and dependance among rules of the same Art. But surely, what ever the reason bee, the conclusion is true, that a trewandly boy never proveth a learned man. And the same may bee observed
in

in the schoole of Christ. Those that come by fits only and heare, and repeat, and consider, when they have little else to do, lose many good notes and instructions, which others who are more diligent, do learne, and suffer many distractions of minde, when they are about the work, and are every way indisposed for learning of Gods Law. *Thomas* by being once absent, when CHRIST appeared to his disciples, lost a great measure of faith, which they gained who were present. Our LORD shewed them his hands and his side, and used arguments of perswasion to convince them of the truth of his resurrection.

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urrection, and they beleev-
ed it: but *Thomas* wan-
ting these grounds of faith,
remained faithlesse in that
great point of our LORDS
resurrection, as is expressed
at large, *Iohn 20*. And so,
hee that is absent, when hee
should not, may chance misse
of those instructions, which
might do him good to sal-
vation: and he that neglect-
eth to use the meanes of
profiting, when hee hath
faire opportunity for them;
may lose that assistance of
grace, that might guide
him in the wayes of godli-
nesse. Consequently hee
that is carefull to thrive in
grace, must *continue* in well
doing, and not do good du-
ties by *spurts*, and as his fan-
cie

cie leadeth him.

2. Hee that will be constant, must not do his services by *halves*. So they do who in their private exercises, do out of idlenesse, and indevotion, curtall and abbreviat either their prayers, or their meditations, or any other usefull exercise. But more especially they do so, who at times of publike Service, do come, when part thereof is past, or go away before all bee ended. Such men runne into a twofold danger: one, that they do offend God by sleighting of his service; and the other, that they may lose the blessing, which usually accompanieth the time of divine Service.

1. They

1. They may anger God by a sleight esteeme of his Service. For so the Prophet saith, *Cursed be hee, that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he, that keepeth back his sword from blood. Ier. 48. 10.* In this sentence wee have two things. (1.) A Commination of judgement: and (2.) an application of it to the present occasion. The Commination is this, *Cursed be he, that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully*; the former Translation readeth it, *negligently*. The meaning is in both, the same. For he that doth Gods work *negligently*, doth do it *deceitfully* also; because he giveth God but one part of his due, and keepeth back

back an other part from him; or for that hee gives him a worse thing instead of a better. In which sense hee is said to bee a *deceiver*, who *having a male in his flock, voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing. Mal. 1. 14.* And in this maner *Saul* was a *deceiver*, when being commanded to kill all the Amalekites, hee saved some of the best of them alive. *1. Sam. 15.* And so *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were *deceivers*, when having offered to God all the money that the land was sold for, they kept back part for themselves. And in the same sense may every one among us be called a *deceiver*, who giveth God a part of his service, and

L I keepeth

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keepeth from him some other part: or, who affoordeth him part of the time, that is due to his worship, and depriveth him of the rest. Such a one is both a *negligent* workman, and a *deceitfull* dealer with God.

2. The application of this threatening in the Prophet is this, *And cursed be hee that keepeth back his sword from blood.* The meaning is, that God had now commanded a work to be performed against his enemies, the Moabites; which was to slay, and kill, and destroy them: and he that did not slay and destroy them accordingly, was hee that did this work of the LORD both *negligently* and *deceitfully*,

fully, though he should pill,
and poll, and impoverish
them. The like application
of this generall rule is pro-
per to this occasion also.
The hearing of Gods word,
with the other duties be-
longing to it, are G O D S
work, which hee requireth
to be done in their time and
season: and if any man do
willingly and unnecessarily
withdraw himselfe from a-
ny part, when hee oweth to
God the whole; hee doth
Gods work deceitfully, and
may feare the curse, that is
denounced against decei-
vers in the Prophet.

2. These men, who think
to please God with a part of
his due, either comming too
late to his Service, or depar-

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ting from it too soone, do runne upon this danger, that by their absence they may lose that blessing, which GOD hath appointed for that part of the service wherein they had no share. More particularly they may misse that prayer, by which they might have obtained the assistance of Gods Spirit, or they may misse the reading of that Chapter which might have converted them to God from some evill way, or they may misse that passage in the Sermon, which might have done them good all their life long. In respect whereof, as he that commeth too late to his dinner, or is called away before his time, may chance

chance to rise hungry or unsatisfied: so they that come too late, or depart too soone from divine Service, may go away destitute of that blessing of God which might nourish their soules with grace to eternall life. Hee therefore that will be a profitable hearer of Gods word, must not carelessly neglect any part of Gods service: wherein wee may take for our paterne the example of *Cornelius*, a man much commended in the Scriptures. He, expecting the comming of *S. Peter*, who should tell him what he should do; did in the meane while, call together his kinsmen and neare friends, and they altogether waited for the Preacher: and

Cap. 15 when *Peter* was come to preach the Gospel unto the, *Wee* (saith *Cornelius*) are all here present before God, to heare all things that are commanded thee of God. *Act. 10. 24, 33.* Where (1.) when it is said, that *Cornelius* had gathered and called together his kinsmen and neare friends; wee may hence gather, that *Cornelius* thought it a speciall benefit, which he desired his chiefe friends might be partakers of, to heare the word of God preached by the Apostle. (2.) When *Cornelius* saith, *Wee* are all here present to heare, hee giueth us to understand, that all the *Hearers* were present and met together, to wait for the Preacher before the Preacher

Preacher came: there was not one, that came tardie, or after the exercise was begun. (3.) When hee saith, wee are all here present, *to heare all things that are commanded of God* to be said unto us; he implieth that they meant not to lose or misse any part of *S. Peters* speech: there was not a man among them all, that meant to depart before all was ended. The like affection and diligence should be shewed by every Christian. It is an argument of little devotion and respect to Gods service, when we come slowly, and go away quickly, and think every houre too much, that is bestowed in this duty. But if wee bee ready aforehand,

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hand, and stay till the full end, and hearken to every thing that God hath sent his servant to tell us; as *Cornelius* and his friends did: then wee may hope, that as *the holy Ghost fell upon them, that then heard the word, vers. 44:* so God will give us his Spirit, to guide us in the truth, and to lead us by a holy life, to eternall glory: Which God grant for **CHRISTS** sake. Amen.

FINIS.

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